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SMALL GARDENS

**Arne Maynard's
kitchen
garden**

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for August*

CHOOSING THE BEST
**salvias, day lilies
and bog plants**

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editor's letter



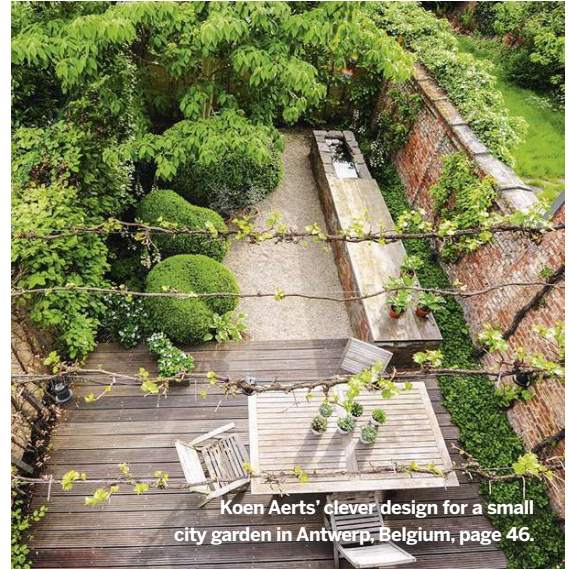
I'm always fascinated by the many and varied ways in which garden owners and designers tackle small gardens. Trying to keep things stylish in a confined space, while allowing for a decent dining or seating area, plenty of plants and possibly some storage is inevitably something of a challenge; it seems editing down the choice of plants and materials is key to success. I'm particularly delighted with the four modest-sized city gardens that we feature this

month – from interior designer Abigail Ahern's garden in Hackney, London, to Scott Lewis's clever revamp of a shady garden in San Francisco, California – and I hope you'll find plenty of ideas to steal. In the final part of designer Arne Maynard's series about his garden in Monmouthshire we focus on late summer planting ideas and his enviable kitchen garden. It's also harvest time at columnist Jojo Tulloh's London allotment and alongside some wonderful tried-and-tested recipes, she gives advice on how to save seed. We also feature plenty of suggestions of plants that will keep your garden looking beautiful through August. Nurserywoman Marina Christopher highlights ten of her seasonal favourites; John Hoyland chooses 16 of the best daylilies; and the owners of the Dutch national collection of salvias select 18 of their favourites from among the 140 forms that they grow at their nursery Tuingoed Foltz. With so many plants, styles and products on offer, our aim is to help you edit down your choice to the very best and provide inspiration, whatever the size of your garden. Hope you enjoy the issue.

Juliet



Save money when you **subscribe to the digital edition** – see page 30



Koen Aerts' clever design for a small city garden in Antwerp, Belgium, page 46.



Arne Maynard's kitchen garden, in Monmouthshire, comes into its own in August, page 70.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS



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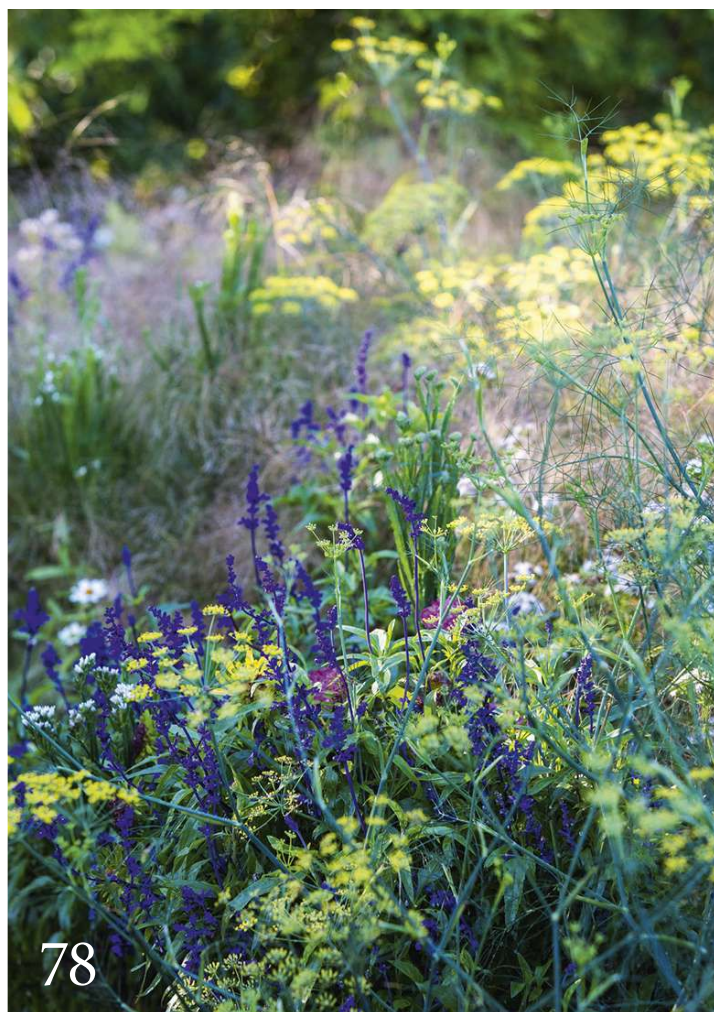
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Garden designer, plantsman and columnist.

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RACHEL WARNE, CLAIRE TAKACS

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†Competitions available to UK residents only.

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ROBERT MABIĆ

Robert specialises in photographing gardens from his native Slovenia to the UK, lately in Belgium and the Netherlands, and his features are published in Dutch, German, Belgian and UK magazines. He captures Laura Dingemans' garden in the Dutch village of Heerle on page 50.

"I'd heard about Laura's garden many times. On the day, the light was good and this lovely garden was ready and waiting for me."



TIM RICHARDSON

Tim has written numerous books, and a collection of his journalism entitled *You Should Have Been Here Last Week* is out this autumn. On page 68 he talks to Didier Wirth, founder of the European Institute of Gardens and Landscape, about the status of French gardens.

"Didier was a great host in France and I enjoyed meeting a true mover and shaker – or should I say déménageur et agitateur."



RACHEL WARNE

Award-winning photographer Rachel travels far and wide to shoot some of the most wonderful gardens and is constantly in awe of work by such garden designers as Nicola Lesbirel. She visits Nicola's own west London garden – her plant laboratory – on page 34.

"I've shot Nicola's garden before and she has this amazing ability to transform a small space; a true delight to shoot."



JOHN HOYLAND

John is a plantsman, garden writer and former nursery owner with an extensive knowledge of plants and gardens both in the UK and abroad. On page 86, he writes about Tuingoed Foltz in the Netherlands, which holds the Dutch collections of *Salvia* and *Echinacea*.

"Tuingoed Foltz was a wonderful place to visit. Around every corner it was crammed with interesting, well-grown plants for sale."

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SYNDICATION & LICENSING

Gardens Illustrated is available for licensing and syndication.

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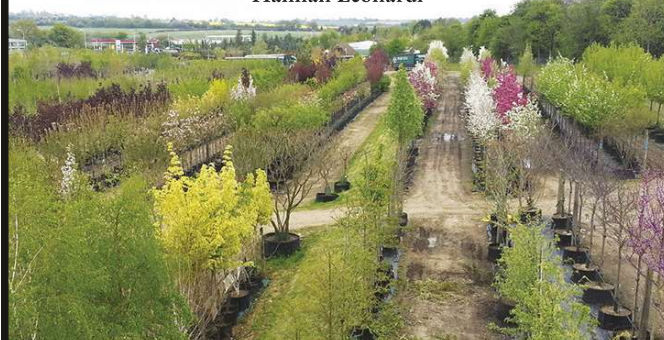
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Standard subscription rates: UK £58.50 per annum; Eire and Europe £54.10 for 13 issues; rest of the world £64.95 for 13 issues. Distribution Frontline, Peterborough. US distribution Source IPD/Speedimex. Email inquiry@seymour.co.uk Printed in the UK by William Gibbons Ltd. Gardens Illustrated (ISSN 0968-8920) (USPS 015-608) is published 13 times a year (monthly with a Special issue in December) by Immediate Media Company Bristol, 2nd Floor, Tower House, Fairfax St, Bristol BS1 3BN, UK. Distributed in the US by Circulation Specialists, LLC, 2 Corporate Drive, Ste 945, Shelton, CT 06484. Periodical postage paid at Shelton, CT and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Gardens Illustrated, PO Box 37495, Boone, IA 50037-0495. Unsolicited manuscripts, artwork or transparencies are accepted on the understanding that the publishers incur no liability for their storage or return. The contents of this magazine are fully protected by copyright and may not be reproduced without permission. The Gardens Illustrated cover is printed on 250gsm Recycled Gloss produced in Belgium by Burgio; the china clay filler is supplied from the UK. The Immediate Media Company Limited is working to ensure that all of its paper is sourced from well-managed forests. This magazine can be recycled for use in newspapers and packaging. Please remove any gifts, samples or wrapping and dispose of it at your local collection point. All prices are correct at time of going to press. © Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited 2015. Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation. ISSN 0968-8920.



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Dig in

What's happening, where to go, what's in flower and what to buy this month

NEWS COMPILED BY ALYS HURN



Abstraction White Rose, 1927.



Autumn Trees – The Maple, 1924.



Oak Leaves, Pink and Grey, 1927.

NEW EXHIBITION

Larger than life

Known for her abstract paintings of enlarged flowers, Georgia O'Keeffe (1887- 1986) was one of the most pioneering artists of the 20th century. Now Tate Modern is mounting a major exhibition of the American modernist's work, which offers a rare opportunity to see more than 100 of her paintings outside of the USA. Until 30 October. Admission £19. tate.org.uk

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE: ABSTRACTION WHITE ROSE 1927 OIL ON CANVAS 36 X 30 (91.4 X 76.2) GEORGIA O'KEEFFE MUSEUM, GIFT OF THE BURNETT FOUNDATION AND GEORGIA O'KEEFFE FOUNDATION ©2016 GEORGIA O'KEEFFE MUSEUM/DACS, LONDON OAK LEAVES, PINK AND GREY 1927 OIL PAINT ON CANVAS 86.4 X 45.7 CM. THE COLLECTION OF THE FREDERICK R. WEISMAN ART MUSEUM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, MINNEAPOLIS MUSEUM PURCHASE 1936.85. ©2016 GEORGIA O'KEEFFE MUSEUM/DACS, LONDON AUTUMN TREES – THE MAPLE 1924 OIL ON CANVAS 36 X 30 (91.4 X 76.2) GEORGIA O'KEEFFE MUSEUM, GIFT OF THE BURNETT FOUNDATION AND GERALD AND KATHLEEN PETERS ©2016 GEORGIA O'KEEFFE MUSEUM/DACS, LONDON



MAZE FESTIVAL Let's get lost

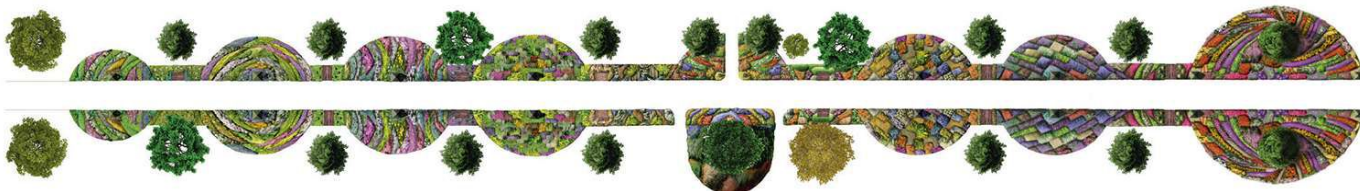
Just 15 miles from Cambridge, in the small town of Saffron Walden, two historic labyrinths have become stars of the Saffron Walden Maze festival, which takes place from 20-21 August. The first is a traditional hedge maze located in the Grade II-listed Bridge End garden and the second, found on Saffron Walden common, is the largest example of only eight surviving turf mazes in England. Other festival highlights include music, maze games and puzzles, maze races, fire jugglers and fireworks. saffronwaldenmaze festival.co.uk



NEW BORDERS

Seeing double

Europe's longest double herbaceous borders, known as The Great Broad Walk Borders, have opened at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Stretching more than 300m from The Orangery to the Palm House, the design uses 30,000 plants to create a diverse mix of texture and colour throughout the year. Planted among the summer perennials are some choice species that have been propagated from Kew's collections, including the rose-purple Tennessee coneflower (*Echinacea tenesseeensis*) and the tiny *Cotula fallax*, which has silvery foliage and yellow, pompom-like flower heads. A collection of themed weekends including the Beauty of the Borders Weekend, 27-29 August, will allow visitors to take a closer look at the planting and take part in workshops and botanical drop-in sessions. kew.org



PRODUCT

Cloud control

Keep your plants watered while you're on holiday with Hozelock's new Cloud Controller. Winner of product of the year at RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2016, the device includes an easy-to-use app that allows you to set and adjust your watering schedule remotely according to the latest weather updates. £114.99 each, hozelock.com



FRESH SPIRIT

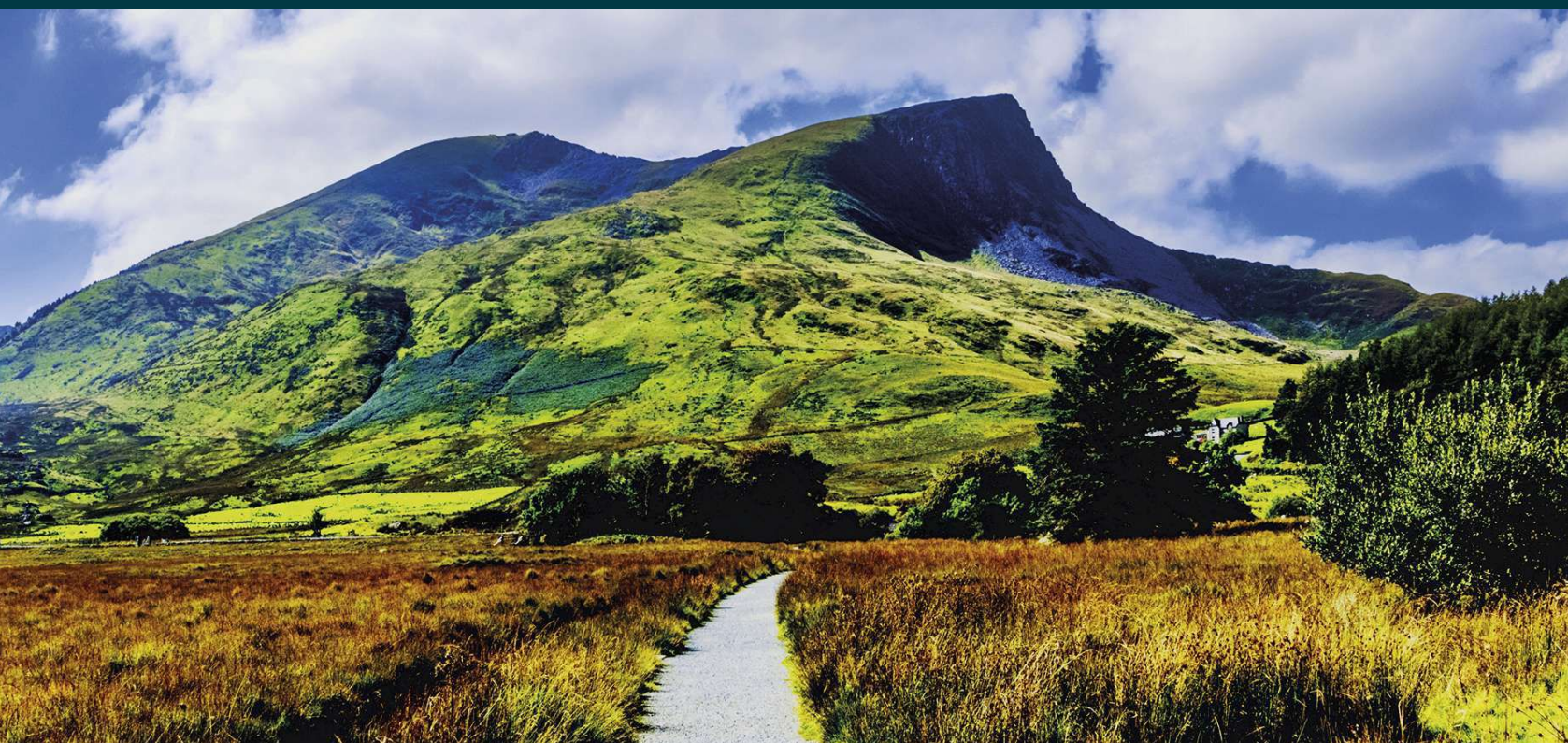
Seedlip Garden 108, a non-alcoholic spirit inspired by the English countryside, is a fresh, clean drink perfect for summer. Featuring distillates of hay, spearmint, pea, hops and herbs, it costs £27.99 for a 70cl bottle. seedlipdrinks.com



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Jacksons Fencing

News, topical treats and more...

New to the range....

It's quite hard to come up with new ideas for fencing. Panels do tend to fit into a fairly predictable format of a certain width, normally 1.8m wide with varying heights, and of course, if they are timber, which is more often than not the case, they are woody in appearance - we like wood, so that's just fine. Our challenge is to come up with fresh ideas that will inspire our customers, giving them some new choices for their garden and other outdoor areas. Hooray for some new additions to the already abundant and attractive range of fencing that we offer. And even if I say it myself, I think they are some winners in this new crop!

We've noticed that even though a lot of our customers prefer to stick with traditional types of fencing, like featherboard (AKA closeboard), there has been a sizeable swing towards the more modern and clean lined panels like our Venetian. In fact, this style has become so popular that we've found it has been imitated, I'd say in most cases rather poorly!

The first new panel to introduce you to is a variation on the Venetian theme; I just mentioned how popular they are, but I'd say the one draw back is its see-throughness. It looks contemporary and sleek, complimenting the chic suburban garden beautifully. But when it comes to the balancing act of light versus privacy, the scales come down heavily in favour of light, and privacy is sacrificed!

So how do you get the stylish look of horizontal slats that still allows some air and light through, but doesn't allow the neighbours a view of you baring your body to catch some rays? Answer: new Venetian Hit and Miss panels. They look as stylish as standard Venetian, but have another set of horizontal slats on the other side. These are fixed to cover the space between the slats on the first side. The slats alternate, in much the same way as hit and miss panels are made.

New Tartan panels looking pretty with summer planting

Which means some air and light can still pass through, but the view through is obscured. Another big benefit is they are what we refer to as 'good both sides' so you and your neighbours don't have a view of rails, which can be a bone of contention.

I'm aware I'm only going to have enough space to tell you about two of our lovely 'newbies' here, so will save the other additions for another time, and tell you about my personal favourite; Tartan trellis, there it is at the top of the page, how pretty is that? I think it fits into the 'less is more' school of design - by not putting a baton at every third spacing, we've created a pattern that looks really great. I'm amazed at how effective it looks.

Enough said, I hope I've whetted your appetite, if you'd like to know more about these or our other new products, go to your dedicated web page www.jacksons-fencing.co.uk/lifestyle louise@jacksons-fencing.co.uk



The new Venetian Hit and Miss panel is on the right of the photo

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Diary



The southwest rotunda under construction at Hever Castle.

• Astor's Garden Legacy

A new permanent exhibition at Hever Castle celebrates the creation of its Grade I-listed gardens by the American millionaire William Waldorf Astor. 10.30am-4.30pm. £16.50. Hever Castle & Gardens, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 7NG. Tel 01732 865224, hevercastle.co.uk

• Talk with Derry Watkins

Nurserywoman Derry Watkins shares her expertise on taking cuttings. 2 August, 10am-4pm. £90. Special Plants, Greenways Lane, Cold Ashton, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN14 8LA. Tel 01225 891686, specialplants.net

• Orchid Society Show at Harlow Carr

Take the opportunity to experience stunning displays of orchids and get advice and expert tips for growing them. 6-7 August. Entry to the show is included in normal garden admission price. RHS Garden Harlow Carr, Crag Lane, Beckwithshaw, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG3 1QB. Tel 08452 658070, rhs.org.uk

• Jekka's Herbetum

Jekka McVicar's herbetum, a living herb encyclopaedia and the largest collection of culinary herbs in the UK,

opens for the NGS this month. 7 August, 10am-4pm. £5. Shellards Lane, Alveston, South Gloucestershire BS35 3SY. Tel 01454 418878, jekkasherbfarm.com

• Natural Dye Workshop

Learn all about the history of natural dyes and experiment with colours, fabrics and techniques. 12 August, 9.30am-4pm. £95. Chelsea Physic Garden, 66 Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea, London SW3 4HS. Tel 020 7352 5646, chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk

• 'Capability' Brown Birthday Weekend

Celebrate 'Capability' Brown's 300th birthday with 18th-century-rules cricket and Georgian dancing at Wimpole Estate. 27 August, 10.30am-5pm. Wimpole Estate, Arrington, Royston, Cambridgeshire SG8 0BW. Tel 01223 206302, nationaltrust.org.uk

• Late Summer Plant Fair

A wide range of rare and unusual heritage trees, shrubs and perennials from local nurseries will be on display and for sale at RHS Garden Rosemoor. 28 August, 10am-3pm. Rosemoor, Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH. Tel 01805 626800, rhs.org.uk



TICKET LAUNCH

Getting the show on the road

Tickets are now on sale for the first RHS Chatsworth Flower Show. The overarching theme will be Design Revolutionaries, celebrating the innovative people throughout history who have changed the way we approach garden design – many of whom, including Joseph Paxton and 'Capability' Brown, helped to shape the gardens at Chatsworth. 7-11 June 2017, rhs.org.uk/chatsworth

PICK OF THE PATCH

If you don't have time to collect your own seed this month, Special Plants Nursery, near Bath, is offering a limited range of freshly collected seed, available via mail order. The range includes *Smyrnium perfoliatum*, which is quick to self seed and produces acid-yellow flowers from April to May. specialplants.net



FESTIVAL

Wild walks

The nature-writing festival NiddFest returns to Nidderdale in Yorkshire from 5-7 August. The event celebrates the very best in nature writing with a programme of talks and outdoor events, such as wild swimming and star gazing, plus guided walks from experts including Noël Kingsbury, who will take visitors on a walking tour of Nidderdale's meadows to explore plant communities in the wild. niddfest.com



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AMALFI COAST, CAPRI AND ISCHIA

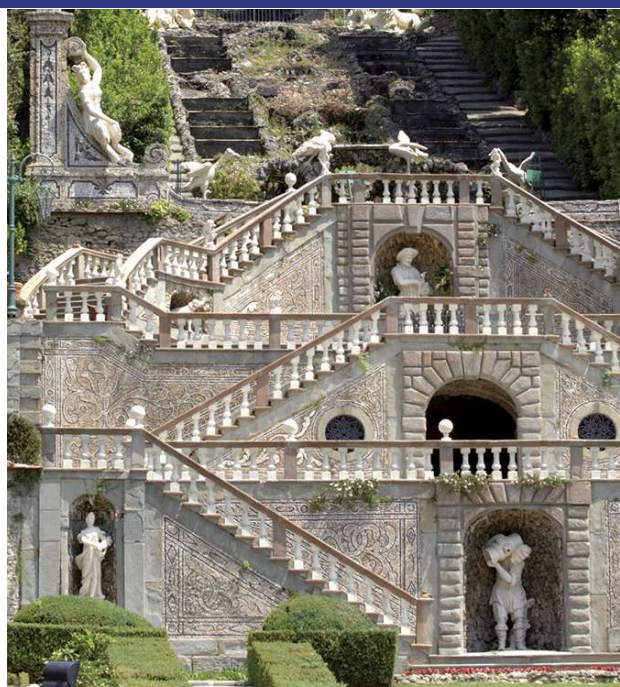
Visits to: Villa Rufolo, Caserta, Villa San Michele Axel Munthe, La Mortella
2017: 4 May, 18 May, 8 June, 14 Sep
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ENVIRONS OF ROME

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VENETO

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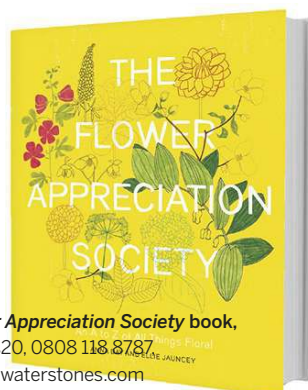
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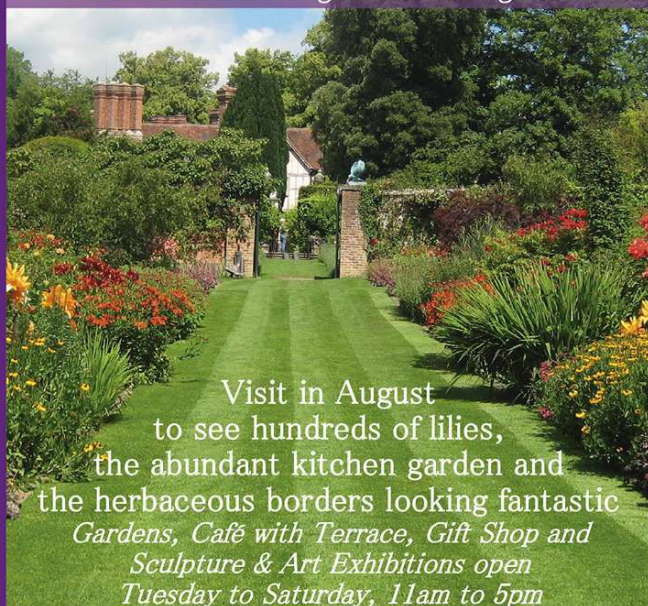
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Daucus carota 'Dara'

I grew this ornamental carrot for the first time in 2013 since when it has rocketed in popularity. The wild carrot is a biennial with white flowers with a central dark spot mimicking an insect to entice visiting flies to pollinate. *D. carota* 'Dara' is an annual with reddish-purple umbels that are quite variable in colour and grown as a seed strain. It makes an unusual cut flower and will stand for several days in water. As the seedhead matures the outer umbel stems elongate resulting in an almost cup-shaped form, colloquially known as 'bird's nest'.

Height 60-90cm.

Origin Europe, central Asia.

Growing conditions Well-drained soil; sun.

Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 3a-9b.

Season of interest Summer to autumn.





August plants

Colourful and nectar-rich plants that hail from the prairies of North America feature heavily among Marina's choices for late summer

WORDS MARINA CHRISTOPHER PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM

Marina Christopher

is a plantswoman who owns Phoenix Perennial Plants in Hampshire*.



Scabiosa columbaria subsp. *ochroleuca*

Scabious are excellent nectar producers and are magnets to pollinators. This delightful form has small, perfectly formed, creamy-yellow flowers on strong, wiry stems that appear to dance in the breeze, over greyish-green, deeply dissected foliage. They flower for several weeks throughout the summer and early autumn and are particular favourites of the skipper and blue butterfly families. The seedheads are decorative too, forming small globes of tightly packed seeds with black bristly hairs.

Height 45-75cm.

Origin Southeastern Europe to Asia minor.

Growing conditions Sharply drained soil; sun. Suitable for alkaline soils.

Hardiness RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.

Season of interest Summer to autumn.

Phlox x arendsii 'Luc's Lilac'

The scent of phlox is evocative of balmy summer evenings, but many *P. paniculata* cultivars are prone to unsightly mildew. Cultivars of *P. x arendsii*, named after German nurseryman Georg Arends, who crossed *P. paniculata* with *P. divaricata*, has better foliage and more mildew resistance. This particular cultivar, selected by Dutch nurseryman Coen Jansen, is tall, vigorous and healthy, and has dome-shaped clusters of sweetly scented lilac flowers. AGM[†].

Height 1.2m.

Origin Cultivar of the hybrid *P. x arendsii*.

Growing conditions Moisture-retentive soil; sun or dappled shade.

Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

Season of interest Summer to early autumn.



Silene regia

This striking plant hails from the US prairies and dry woodlands. In late summer its red, star-shaped flowers look like a shower of bright fireworks. However, the foliage can be a disappointment, emerging healthy and light green but often becoming slightly contorted as the flower stems elongate. Growing it surrounded by tall, flowering perennials and grasses alleviates this problem. It's known as catchfly as the stem below the flower is covered with a sticky secretion that captures unwitting insects.

Height 75cm-1.5m.

Origin Northeastern USA.

Growing conditions Well-drained soil; sun or dappled shade.

Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

Season of interest Summer.



Monarda 'Jacob Cline'

Bergamots are magnets for pollinating insects with terminal heads of tubular flowers in a wide range of colours from white to shocking pink and red. They often have attractive, contrasting bracts that add to their beauty. One drawback is that they are prone to disfiguring mildew especially in a dry season and in the warmer south. In general, red-flowered cultivars are more vigorous and less prone to disease. *M.* 'Jacob Cline' is the most healthy and lusty of all the cultivars I have grown, with striking, large red flowers and strong, upright growth.

Height 1.2-1.5m.

Origin Northeastern USA.

Growing conditions Moisture-retentive soil; sun or dappled shade.

Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

Season of interest Summer.

Parthenium integrifolium

Known colloquially as wild quinine, this North American plant is a member of the daisy family with rough, blunt-toothed leaves, that are grey-green in colour, and flat-headed corymbs of creamy-white flowers. They look similar to everlasting flowers, attract lots of pollinators and stay in good condition for several weeks with a quiet, subtle charm. On my heavy clay soil slugs ravage the leathery foliage, leaving them as lacy as a doily or sometimes completely devoid of leaves. Seedheads persist into the autumn.

Height 90cm.

Origin Eastern USA.

Growing conditions Any soil; sun.

Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

Season of interest Summer to early autumn.



Liatris scariosa

Also known as blazing stars or gayfeathers, *Liatris* are colourful components of dry prairies and woodlands, with showy spikes of flowers that are caviar to butterflies as well as other insects. They are unusual in that the flowers open from the top downwards. Of the 30-40 species in North America, few are grown in British gardens and to my mind most are inferior to *Liatris scariosa*, which should be better known. It has scaly buttons, well separated along the flowering stem, often deep-red mirroring the flower-bud scales. Fluffy, pinkish-purple, daisy-like flowers open in summer.

Height 60cm-1.2m.

Origin Southeastern USA.

Growing conditions Well-drained soil; sun.

Hardiness RHS H7, USDA 3a-8b.

Season of interest Summer.

Places to visit

Recommended places to see seasonal plants at their best

Monarda is an important genus providing nectar for pollinators. It has a diverse range of flower and bract colour and gives valuable height in a border as well as being aromatic. If you want to see them at their best this month, there are two Plant Heritage (nccpg.com) collections listed in the **2016 National Plant Collections Directory**: one in Devon and the other in Pembrokeshire.



Monarda didyma.

Both areas usually have sufficient precipitation in the summer months to make downy mildew less likely. The Devon garden is open 22 and 24 July 2016, and other dates by appointment. Mrs F Reddaway, 1 Greenbank, South Zeal, Okehampton, Devon EX20 2JS. Tel 07850 305040. The Pembrokeshire garden is open 30-31 July 2016, as well as other dates through the National Garden

Salvia 'Royal Bumble'

In a recent shrubby sage trial at RHS Wisley, this stood out from the others with its sumptuous red flowers, contrasting dark calyces and stems over healthy mid-green foliage. In its native North America, it would be pollinated by hummingbirds; in the UK bees are more than happy to fulfil the pollinator role. It is reasonably hardy given good drainage, although severe frosts may cut it to ground level with new shoots emerging from the rootstock later in the spring. Untidy growth can be pruned back to create a better shape. AGM.

Height 60-90cm.

Origin Selection from *S. microphylla*.

Growing conditions Sharp drainage; sun.

Hardiness RHS H5, USDA 7a-9b.

Season of interest Summer and autumn.



Papaver *miyabeana*

I first encountered this delightful, diminutive poppy on a rock garden in Oxfordshire at the beginning of my horticultural career and it is still a favourite. From tight rosettes of greyish-green foliage arise sinuous flowering stems topped with delicate, almost tissue-like petals of the palest lemon. The unopened buds are exquisite and covered with soft, black hairs. Sharp drainage is essential as it is prone to rotting at ground level and it resents winter wet. Plants tend to be short lived but will usually seed around freely given the right conditions. A gem for a rock or scree garden.

Height 8-10cm.

Origin Japan.

Growing conditions Sharp drainage; sun.

Hardiness RHS H5, USDA 5a-7b.

Season of interest Summer.

Verbena *macdougalii* 'Lavender Spires'

Observation is key to nurserymen and gardeners seeking out new garden-worthy plants. I was lucky enough to have sown a seed tray of *V. macdougalii* when I noticed one that differed from the other seedlings. It flowered for many months, did not look like *V. macdougalii*, was attractive to pollinators but set no seed. 'Lavender Spires' may be a sterile hybrid of *V. macdougalii* and *V. hastata*, a hardy, North American vervain, which has a short flowering season of two to three weeks and then makes copious seed. Although sterile, this still produces nectar.

Height 1.5m.

Origin Southwestern USA. Hybrid origin.

Growing conditions Good drainage; sun.

Hardiness RHS H4, USDA 4a-9b.

Season of interest Late spring to autumn.



Scheme. Mrs C Whittaker,
Glyn Bach Gardens,
Port Hywel, Efailwen,
Pembrokeshire SA66 7JP.
Tel 01994 419104,
glynbachgardens.co.uk

Inspirational planting on thin chalk soil and in gravel has been honed to perfection in a one-acre garden at **The Buildings, Broughton**, where pelargoniums, erodiums, sages, grasses and many unusual plants fill this

beautiful site. Open for the NGS, 30-31 July, 2-5pm. Stockbridge, Hampshire SO20 8BH.

In the summer of 2010, Tom Coward, who had previously worked alongside Fergus Garrett at Great Dixter, was appointed head gardener at **Gravetye Manor** in Sussex. Gravetye was once the home of the great gardener and botanist William Robinson whose



RACHEL WARNE

Gravetye Manor.

book *The English Flower Garden* has been one of my gardening bibles throughout my nursery career. With the backing of new owners, Tom has been working on a major restoration of the garden, making this a garden well worth a visit at any time of the year, but especially in summer. Gravetye Manor, Vowels Lane, West Hoathly, Sussex RH19 4LJ. Tel 01342 810567, gravetyemanor.co.uk

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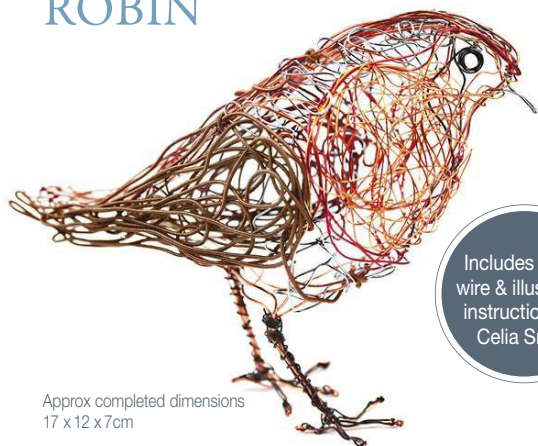
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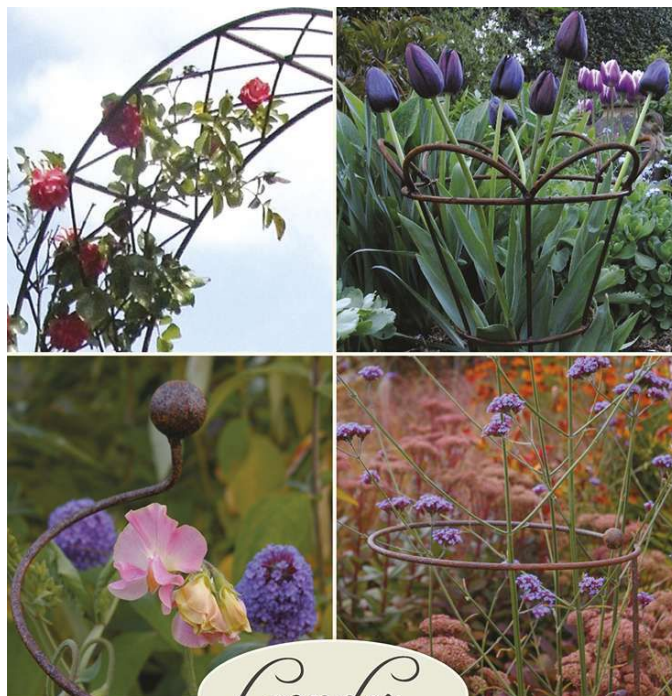
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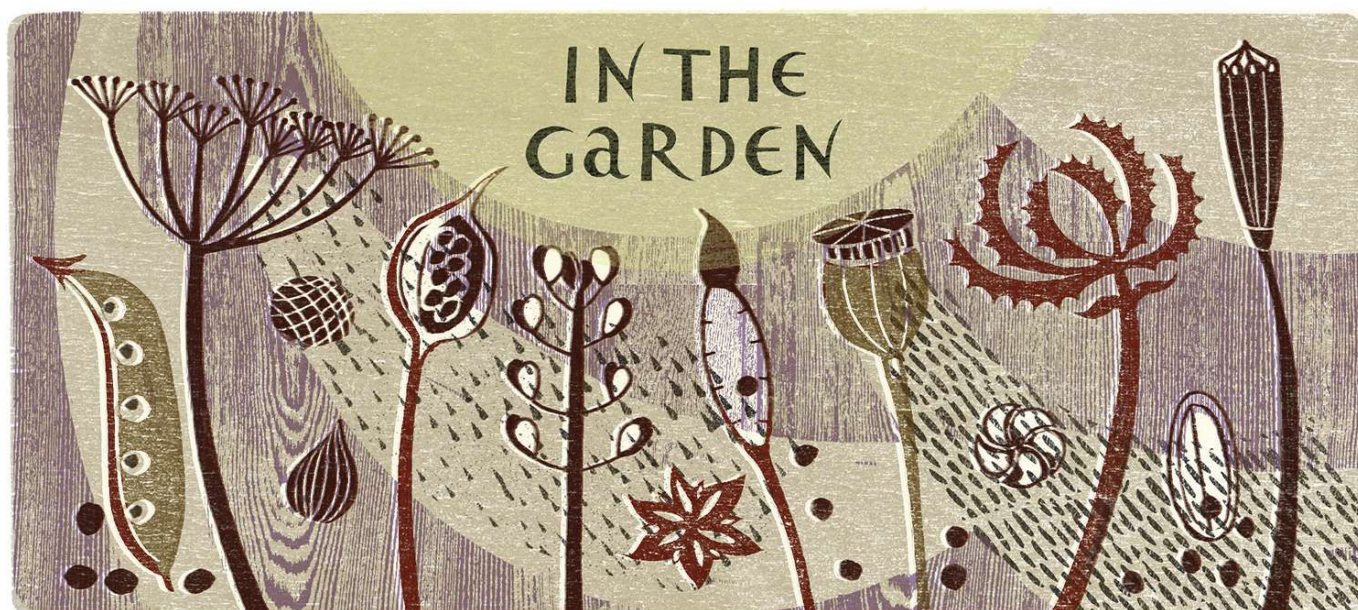
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With everything on her allotment coming to fruition, Jojo is also feeling swell, but with an eye on next year's crop, she starts saving seed

WORDS JOJO TULLOH ILLUSTRATIONS SARAH YOUNG

Swell is a good word to say; it really works the mouth. It starts with a pout, then sibilance, a grin and finally your tongue presses out the final satisfying L against your teeth. It's also the right word for the August vegetable patch. All around you fruits and vegetables are pumping up like overzealous gym addicts. The yearly miracle of gargantuan effect from tiny beginnings is here, with ever-expanding courgettes, peppers and cucumbers, and tomato plants with heavy trusses of red fruits. If all has gone well now is the horn of plenty and in all senses of the word you should be feeling swell.

Towards the end of the season it's not only fruits but also seeds that swell and then harden. If you've never saved seed, do try it. Not only does it make economic sense, but by saving the seed from plants that are locally adapted you'll be giving yourself a head start next year. Without the many thousands of years of seed saving there would be no gardening. In the past, gardeners saved seed from the plants that did best for them, improving the quality year on year. Each plant from which they saved seed was a little bit different and so a vast, living gene bank was created that, through genetic variety, was more resilient when faced with disease or a variable climate.

Start with something easy. Rocket, chervil, chicory, lamb's lettuce, chard and lettuce all run to seed early in the season when you can

be sure of heat to ripen the seed. Choose seed from one well-grown cultivar, allow the seed to dry on the plant (staked so it stays upright) then cut the stem low down and hang upside down over a sheet of newspaper somewhere dry. When the seedpods are brittle, rub them out on to paper, blow off the chaff and put into packets. I sometimes rub my rocket seedpods directly over the soil. The casings gone, the dry, pale-yellow stalks are topped with a papery, silver membrane held in a minute spear shape – beautiful enough to stay in a vase on my kitchen windowsill over winter.

Tomatoes are another easy seed to save; take fully ripe fruits, cut in half, squeeze out the seeds and juice into a jam jar and let them ferment in a warm place, stirring now and then (I'm afraid it will stink). The idea is to kill off any bacteria on the seeds and remove the jelly-like coating. After three days, add water; the good seeds will sink. Strain off the gunk and wash the good seeds in a sieve putting them on a saucer to dry (warm but not in direct sunlight). Put in an envelope somewhere cool and the dry seed will last for four years. If you are inspired to save seed from plants that require isolation (pumpkins, squash, peppers), then take a look at *Back Garden Seed Saving* by Sue Stickland (Eco-Logic Books, 2008), which will tell you all you need to know. ▷

WHAT TO DO NOW

Fruit trees are planted when dormant in midwinter, which means fruits aren't available to taste. I planted a pear, *Pyrus communis* 'Louise Bonne of Jersey', only to discover (from Edward Bunyard's indispensable *The Anatomy of Dessert*) that though a 'good all-round fruit', its 'prominence of

flavour' veers into the 'hair-wash class'. To make sure you pick the right cultivar you must first try the fruit yourself. Now is the perfect time to start eating your way round local orchard farm gate sales and farmers' markets, making notes while the juice drips from your chin. However, if I could have only one

fruit tree it would have to be a plum: the fruit is tricky to buy really ripe and is good for cooking, so an obvious choice for the kitchen garden. If I had more space I would definitely plant a windbreak hedge of the quick-growing damson 'Farleigh Damson': a foaming mass of blossom in spring and plenty

of fruit in September. Of all plums, greengages (named for Sir William Gage who introduced them to Britain in around 1720) are my favourite. I have an 'Old Greengage' from Ashridge Trees (ashridgetrees.co.uk), which although not prolific has a superb flavour both raw and in a plum and almond tart.



Those who don't like tomatoes should skip to the bottom of the page. This month is an unashamed hymn to the home-grown variety; the mere sniff of which, with its felty green musk, is enough to trigger an avalanche of memory.

Our variable climate often ripens tomatoes irregularly so if you struggle with outdoor tomatoes of a greenish hue you might be relieved to learn that *insalata caprese*, the tomato and mozzarella salad from Capri, is most authentically made with a tomato that is a little green and more acid. When you use tomatoes that are still slightly sour rather than fully ripe they cut the richness of the creamy mozzarella. For four people, take 500g of slightly under-ripe tomatoes and two mozzarella balls. Slice and scatter with fresh basil leaves and a little olive oil. Dig out the recipe for the spicy sauce *zhug* [issue 231, page 32] make up a batch and spread it on toast topped with a mixture of sliced red and green tomatoes. Breakfast with a bang.

If you love *gazpacho* (the cold tomato soup from Spain) then it's almost certain that you will also adore its more muscular brother, *salmorejo*. It too can be eaten as a soup, garnished with chopped hard-boiled egg and serrano ham, or used as a sauce in which to dip fried morsels, or underneath vegetables (asparagus earlier in the

year), or perhaps a stuffed courgette flower? It would be lovely with fish or seafood too. Take 500g of tomatoes, one shallot, or half a small red onion, and a small, deseeded, pale-green pepper. Blend in a food processor then sieve the purée (compost the solids) and return the liquid to the (rinsed) food processor. Add a teaspoon

of sherry vinegar, half a garlic clove (crushed to a paste with sea salt) and 50g of stale bread, soaked in water for five minutes and squeezed out. Blend again then with the motor running (as for mayonnaise) add 150ml of olive oil in a thin stream. When the sauce has emulsified pour into a bowl and season (you may need a pinch of sugar). Chill until ready to serve either as a dipping sauce or underneath your fried delicacies.

Trempó is a Mallorcan salad cut up and prepared in advance then left to marinade for an hour. Packed into a clip-top jar it makes a very

good simple picnic with some fresh bread and soft cheeses. Take a kilogram of your ripest fruits and slice into chunks, dice a medium white onion into largish chunks and slice into strips two, deseeded, long, pale-green peppers. Whisk 100ml of olive oil with the juice of a lemon and pour over the vegetables. Mix well, season to taste and add a good pinch of cumin seeds. Transfer to a clip-top jar and wait. □

USEFUL COOKERY TIP

No. 8 Horseradish mayonnaise

Dig a root of horseradish and add, peeled and grated, to a bowl of home-made mayonnaise with a little chopped parsley. Use to stuff tomatoes or alongside fish.

RECIPES

Top hat

Recipe books assume all crops ripen uniformly, so it is pleasing to find *The Country Housewife's Book* by Lucy H Yates (Persephone Books, £12), which acknowledges the 'bits and bobs' that ripen late or early. Written in the 1930s, it is full of practical advice. If you find yourself with an extra bowlful

of blackcurrants then this steamed pudding is perfect for a grey August day when the sun has not got its hat on. **120g butter, 120g caster sugar, 150g self-raising flour, zest of 1 lemon, 2 eggs, 1tsp baking powder 100ml milk, 250g destalked blackcurrants, 2tbsp sugar, 2tbsp blackcurrant jelly.** Cream the butter and caster sugar,

beat well and add the lemon zest. Mix in a spoonful of sifted flour, add eggs, fold in rest of flour with baking powder, and add milk. Butter a 1-litre pudding basin. Put a circle of greaseproof paper in the bottom, add blackcurrants, sugar and jelly, then pour in the flour mixture. Place a circle of pleated buttered paper on top and cover completely with a tin

foil lid (with pleat in the centre of foil), tie string around the rim of the basin, making a handle for when it's hot. Place in a deep saucepan on a wire stand and fill with kettle-hot water half way up the basin. Steam gently with the lid on for two hours, topping up the pan with boiling water. Rest for 15 minutes then serve with thick cream or custard.

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Charles Over 3 seater painted Lichen Green



Indian Lattice 2 Seater



Leagrave 3 Seater painted Purple



Edwardian Armchair



Medium Edo seat painted White



Leighton 2 Seater



Chinoiserie 3 Seater painted Red



Audley Curve Seat



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Daniele Altieri

Italian-born Daniele is a self-employed gardener, whose recipe for horticultural success looks to a host of different gardening traditions

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Earliest garden memories My grandfather was an officer of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a very methodical and quiet gentleman. I have memories of him clipping the box parterre or raking the gravel with the patient dedication of a Zen monk.

Who has inspired your career? I trained in molecular biology and my first job was as a scientist. It was in my early thirties that my green fingers seriously started to itch. Observing my mother's passion for gardening played a key role in my career change.

Favourite garden The Courts in Wiltshire, where I worked at the beginning of my horticultural journey. It is a living lesson in planting and garden design and the most atmospheric garden I have ever encountered. It will stay in my heart for ever.

Favourite planting style I moved from my native Italy, with its highly structured Renaissance gardens, to the UK and its tradition of growing a fantastic variety of plants. Put the two together, add a bit of Oudolfian sauce, stir in lots of bulbs, shake firmly and you will have gardens that are beautiful for 12 months of the year.

Horticultural heroes I live near Sissinghurst and the head gardener,

Troy Scott Smith, my former boss at The Courts and now a close friend, is a constant source of knowledge and provoking ideas. You can't help but be inspired by somebody who texts you at 4.30am telling you that he is mowing the lawn in the Lower Courtyard!

Words of wisdom To memorise the name of a new plant, smell it and speak its name at the same time. I call it the 'madeleine' technique: an indelible association between the name and your olfactory memory will form in your brain.

What principles have guided your attitude to gardening?

The old debate about the primacy of design versus horticulture (or vice-versa) is sterile. Every single act of gardening is an act of design, even weeding. You can decide to weed out a surplus of self-seeded *Sisyrinchium striatum* but you need your designer's hat on to decide which ones will go.

Recommended gardening book and blog Russell Page's *The Education of a Gardener* on the art of garden creation, and Noël Kingsbury's blog at noels-garden.blogspot.co.uk

Contact danielealtieri@aol.com, giardinibellissimi.com

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Wooden Keyrings : 95 Locations

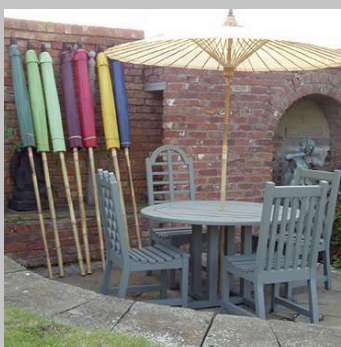


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Small gardens

Limited outdoor space doesn't have to be restrictive. There's a lot you can do with compact gardens, as these four plots illustrate



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Changing spaces

The planting in designer Nicola Lesbirel's west London garden may be constantly evolving, but the strong structure creates an overall feeling of cohesion

WORDS CAMILLA PHELPS PHOTOGRAPHS RACHEL WARNE

Designer Nicola Lesbirel's own London garden has evolved over almost three decades. But one constant of this long, narrow, town garden, is that its layout is always primarily based around maximising the planting space. "I am plant greedy," she says. "And I can't resist trying out new varieties."

Although she has never formally designed the garden, Nicola knew she wanted a space where she could hang out with family and friends in the late-afternoon sun, and have room for experimentation – the garden has pretty much become her 'plant laboratory'. "I needed to learn more about plants," she says. "So I dug up the lawn and the only space left to walk was down the middle." Hence a simple, straight, wooden

path bisects sunny and shady borders. It leads from the paved terrace outside her garden flat, to the garden's newest feature: a cedar-clad, combined greenhouse and potting shed at the far end.

Nicola, who won a gold medal for her Laurent-Perrier garden at the 2003 Chelsea Flower Show, spent three years working alongside Dan Pearson in his studio. This experience, along with her previous career as a designer and buyer at the Conran Shop, has influenced both the diversity of her planting in this small space and her choice of high-end landscaping materials. "I like very simple bones, simple lines and good-quality materials," she says. "All the excitement needs to come from plants." And she has certainly packed in plenty of plants: ▷

KEY ELEMENTS

What Designer's own garden.

Where West London.

Soil London clay, enriched with organic matter.

Size 5 x 28m.

Aspect East facing.

Special features A plant-filled

garden that maximises space in its borders, and has strong structural elements.

A contemporary greenhouse-cum-potting shed.

Designed by Nicola Lesbirel (lesbirel.com).

1 House

2 Paved dining terrace

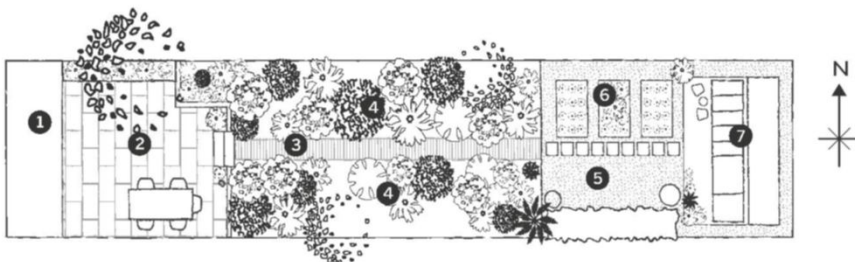
3 Wooden path

4 Borders

5 Gravel terrace

6 Raised vegetable and herb bed

7 Greenhouse-cum-potting shed





Nicola Lesbirel replaced the lawn in her narrow town garden with two deep borders separated by a wooden path.

Designing a small garden

Nicola's top tips for making a small garden feel bigger



1 Spend money on the best materials you can afford for hard landscaping and this will stand you in good stead. If your garden has good bones you can relax about the planting.

2 Don't mix too many different materials. Create families of pots and group them so they are either the same size or the same glaze, such as terracotta or salt glaze.

3 Think carefully about where you are going to place key plants, such as specimen trees and shrubs. You can plant trees near to a house if the foundations are up to it.

4 The challenge is not how many plants to put in but what to leave out. As a general rule of thumb, I would use a larger quantity of a few species, rather than small numbers

of lots of different plants – you need to create focal points where the eye can stop, breathe and relax. Nicola likes to use controlled larger shapes, such as her 'hippos', as a foil for planting that can then dance in front.

5 Don't forget about the practicalities. Take time with your soil preparation – this really is worth the effort. Also plan for storage and practicalities, such as your water supply, before you start planning the planting. And choose furniture that can live permanently outdoors.

▷ five trees, perennials, grasses and ferns, salad and herb beds, and a cutting bed – she loves bringing fresh flowers from the garden into the house.

Three multi-stemmed amelanchiers offer seasonal delights throughout the year, while two betulas provide taller, feathery distraction and some privacy. The three voluptuous box plants, she calls her 'hippos', create an evergreen backbone and a foil for airier plants. *Astrantia major* 'Star of Beauty', A. 'Hadsphen Blood', *Geum* 'Mrs J Bradshaw' and a froth of lime-green *Alchemilla mollis* add both colour and movement.

"I like collections of 'busyness' interrupted by a calm, quiet place," she says. To this effect, the timber fences are left mostly bare to create visual 'breathing space'. In peak season, taller summer perennials, such as

Digitalis purpurea f. *albiflora* and *Sanguisorba menziesii*, provide a light camouflage. At the far end, tall hornbeam hedges on either side provide a sense of enclosure and frame the view back through the garden.

When she installed the greenhouse-cum-potting shed, Nicola sacrificed a view that stretched beyond the garden to a wild area. In losing this, she gained more space to nurture young plants and citrus trees, a home for her collections of sedums and vintage watering cans, and, most importantly, room for a comfy chair and a radio. "It's not a hard-working greenhouse – more of a grown-up Wendy house really. It's amazing what you can cram into a small building, but it doesn't feel like a shed at the end of the garden. It's another space to hang out in." □

Clockwise from top left The backdoor of Nicola's house opens on to a York stone terrace, filled with container plants, which forms a calm dining area and a foil to the 'busyness' of her plant-filled borders beyond.

The raised beds for salad plants and herbs are hidden from the house by the lush planting.

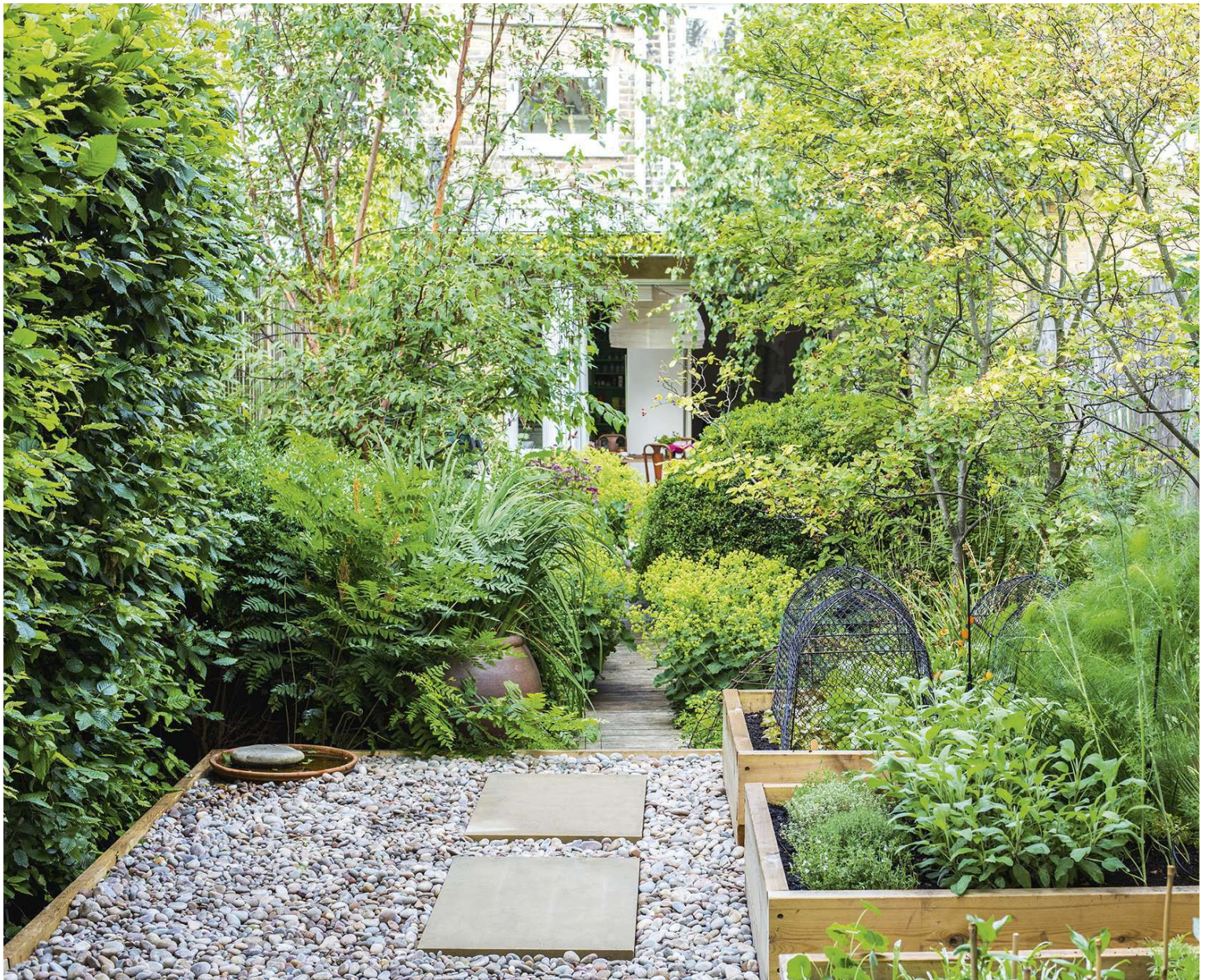
Seen from above, the strong structure of Nicola's narrow town garden becomes evident and is dominated by the shaggy balls of box that she calls her 'hippos' and which act as a foil to her airy planting.

The cedar-clad greenhouse and potting shed is a new feature that allows Nicola to experiment with plants. Nicola took an existing design by Woodpecker Joinery (woodpecker-joinery.co.uk) and customised the design and fittings of the greenhouse to make it a bit more special.

Nicola has placed chairs and a table outside her greenhouse-cum-potting shed to create a second seating area where she can relax and enjoy her garden.

Digitalis purpurea f. *albiflora*, *Astrantia major* 'Star of Beauty' and *Geum* 'Mrs J Bradshaw' bring colour, height and texture to the plantings in the borders.







Box of tricks

In this award-winning garden in San Francisco, designer Scott Lewis has employed a host of clever devices to make a small and shady space appear light and large

WORDS JODIE JONES PHOTOGRAPHS SCOTT LEWIS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

In a city filled with quirky houses and beautiful gardens, Parkside fits right in. When designer Scott Lewis first visited this family home in San Francisco, he found a building of great character that had been sensitively modernised to suit its new owners' contemporary aesthetic, with a small garden stuck in an earlier, shabbier incarnation.

There were some interesting plants, including a beautiful Japanese maple that remains today, but most of the small plot was laid to patchy grass and the only feature was a ramshackle shed at the far end.

The owners' brief was simple. They wanted a contemporary garden to complement their remodelled home, with play space for their children. They also wanted interesting plants and a lawn. "We had to talk them out of the lawn," says

Scott. "This garden is generally too shady and, given the prevailing damp fogs in this area, it would have stopped the children using it for much of the year."

Instead, he suggested bluestone paving slabs to provide an all-weather surface. This was laid in an elongated triangle broadening towards the boundary, and so playing with perspective to make the garden seem larger than it really is.

He was helped in this visual trickery by the fact that the garden backs on to a beautiful park, filled with mature eucalyptus and Monterey cypress. This borrowed landscape introduces a touch of wilderness, which is the perfect foil to the controlled artifice of the planting.

"The owners were keen to stick to a palette of green and white plants, which ▶

KEY ELEMENTS

What Small family garden.

Where San Francisco, California, USA.

Size 7.6 x 12m.

Soil Sandy, with excellent drainage.

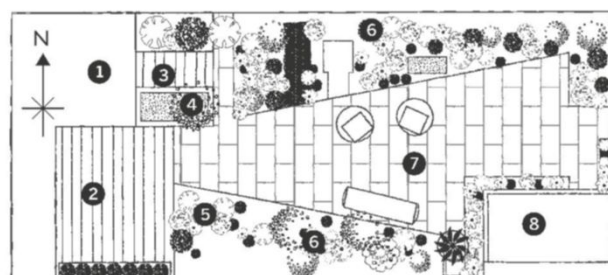
Aspect West facing.

Special features Lush planting for a shady garden in a modernist setting.

Clever use of perspective. Ivy-clad artist's studio.

Climate Mild winters, cool summers, frequent fogs.

Designed by Scott Lewis Landscape Architecture (SLLA) (sllasf.com).



- 1 House
- 2 Decked terrace
- 3 Steps to basement
- 4 *Crataegus persimilis* 'Prunifolia'
- 5 *Acer palmatum*
- 6 Planting
- 7 Bluestone paving
- 8 Ivy-clad artist's studio

The Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*) surrounding the garden create a naturalistic setting in which the ivy-clad artist's studio stands as a strong contemporary feature.

Dealing with shade

Scott's five top tips for planting up a shady garden

1 Plan for texture. Combine deciduous plants with interesting winter form, broadleaf evergreens for a base foundation and perennials for seasonal interest. Conifers can provide an unusual textural accent.

2 Consider the hard landscaping. This is an important part of the overall composition. Take time to choose the appropriate stone, gravel, concrete, wood or metal, and don't just look at them in bright light – evaluate what materials look like in shade and when wet with rain.

3 Use a green and white palette. This simplest of colour schemes works especially well in shade. Combine different green leaf textures with a variety of white-flowering plants, and be sure to incorporate some variegated plants for additional interest.

4 Include some ferns. Ferns are dependable in shade and provide great texture, either as individual clumps or en masse. Some prefer dry shade; others are happy in damp conditions.

5 Use plants with small delicate flowers, such as those you might find in a natural woodland. These act as a contrasting tracery against the mass of textured foliage. Some, such as *Sarcococca ruscifolia*, offer the bonus of winter scent.

▷ allowed us to experiment with texture and form,” says Scott. Wherever you look there are wonderful juxtapositions, as in one border where a clump of *Helleborus niger* overhangs a mix of *Bergenia* ‘Bressingham White’, *Galium odoratum*, white *Viola odorata*, *Geranium sanguineum* ‘Album’ and *Acorus gramineus* ‘Variegatus’.

On a larger scale, a multi-stemmed *Crataegus persimilis* ‘Prunifolia’, was planted directly outside the dining-room window to provide immediate sculptural interest, while also framing the view into the woodland garden beyond. This tree is underplanted with a mass of the California meadow sedge, *Carex pansa*, which is a plant popularly used in the San Francisco area for creating an alternative lawn, and so very nearly granting the owners their wish for turf. Once again, the textural contrast between the tree and the sedge works to enhance both plants.

There is also some clever use of colour contrast, in the form of an over-scale bright

red container placed near the end of the garden, which sings out against the largely green backdrop. It's a classic artist's trick to draw the eye and, appropriately, here it sits alongside an artist's studio in a neat ivy-covered cube. It takes a moment to realise that this stylish structure is in fact the old shed, clad in a wire framework and brought bang up to date with a deceptively simple but hugely impactful selection of plants.

A few years ago, when this garden received an award from the American Society of Landscape Architects, the judging panel praised the way the diverse planting provided a rich, naturalistic aesthetic quality within a simple, modern form.

This studio clearly illustrates their point, and stands as a perfect metaphor for the garden as a whole, where art and craft have combined to bring a dilapidated but dearly loved space up to date for a contemporary generation. □

Clockwise, from top left A beautiful *Acer palmatum*, retained from the old garden design, frames the view down the garden. The filigree of green fills the skyline throughout the year.

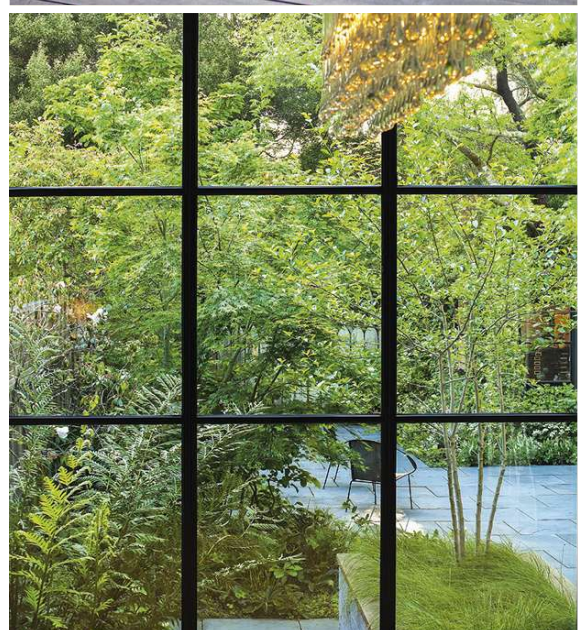
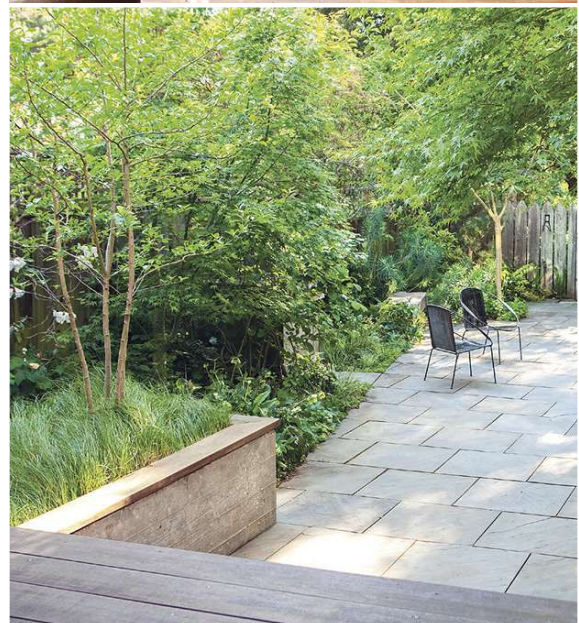
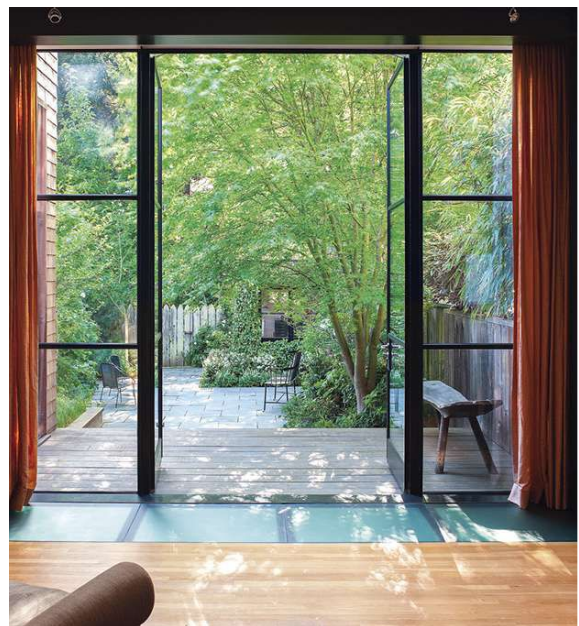
The garden was constructed around the mature acer, to the left of the decked terrace, with a complementary combination of green-and-white plants, including *Deutzia gracilis* ‘Nikko’.

Functional steps to the basement have been artfully integrated into flower beds of shade-loving hellebores and ferns. In the raised bed, a mass of *Carex pansa* creates a faux ‘lawn’ under the *Crataegus persimilis* ‘Prunifolia’.

Scott clad the old shed in a cube of metal trellis, which protects the timber walls from climbing ivy damage, and gives the structure a pleasingly contemporary facelift.

From the dining room, the view is filled with a bed of shade-loving plants, including several *Woodwardia* ferns, *sarcococca* and violas.

The quality of hard landscaping is exceptional, from the precision of the bluestone paving slabs to the beautiful board-formed, concrete raised bed, in which grows a *Crataegus persimilis* ‘Prunifolia’.





Inside out

In her small east London garden, interior designer Abigail Ahern has broken all the gardening rules to create a quirky outdoor room that's as stylish as her interiors

WORDS ROSANNA MORRIS PHOTOGRAPHS RACHEL WARNE

Interior designer Abigail Ahern wouldn't call herself a gardener. "Gardening is a whole freaky world to me," she says. But when she built a two-storey glass extension at the back of her terraced house in Hackney 13 years ago, she realised she couldn't ignore the small patch of outside space beyond.

"I didn't realise the importance of the garden until I had a view of it," she says. "It was twee and suburban – there were picket fences, ponds, gnomes and crazy paving."

So when Abigail finished the inside of her house (decorated in her signature dark, moody style), she confronted the outside and ripped everything out save for a single dark-coloured lilac, *Syringa Bloomerang* Dark Purple (= 'Smsjbp7'). She then played it safe, keeping the look minimal with white pebbles, some bamboo – including a dark-

stemmed *Phyllostachys nigra* – and lots of tiny jasmine plants. Gradually, however, she became more confident and hauled in large trees (figs and an olive), let the jasmine cover an entire wall and created what is essentially an outdoor living room, complete with a concrete kitchen from the Dutch company WWO (www.wwoo.nl/en), a fireplace, armchairs and lighting. Today, ivy and wisteria tumble into the jasmine, herb pots overflow, and logs are stacked in every crevice for outdoor and indoor fires.

In her garden, as with her interiors, Abigail likes to break the rules. Who, for instance, hangs indoor pendant lights in a garden? And what gardener in their right mind plants two eucalyptus trees in a small space? Or actively encourages *Robinia pseudoacacia* 'Frisia' (false acacia) until it towers overhead. Or loves an >

KEY ELEMENTS

What Small private garden and outdoor living space.

Where Northeast London.

Soil Chalky.

Size 6 x 30.5m.

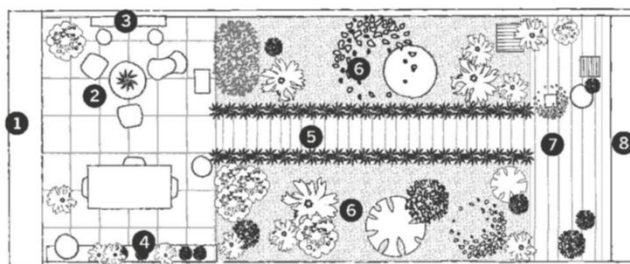
Aspect West facing.

Special features

Outdoor kitchen, living space and cabin with rambling planting.

Designed by Abigail Ahern.

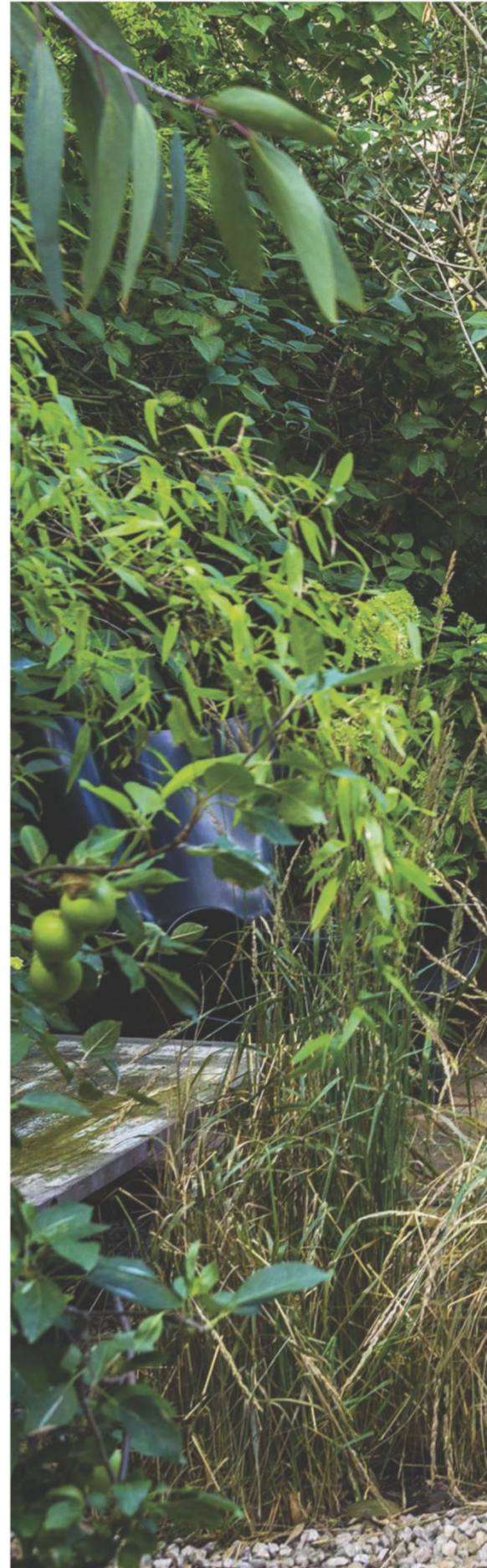
Find out more about Abigail's design school and her London stores at abigailahern.com



- 1 House
- 2 Seating area
- 3 Outdoor fireplace
- 4 Outdoor kitchen
- 5 Decked pathway
- 6 Gravel and planting
- 7 Decked area
- 8 Cabin



LIAM MCAULEY





A large olive tree, which had to be brought in through the kitchen windows, stands in front of Abigail's black cabin. The faux cacti are from her store.

Interiors tips for small gardens

Abigail has applied the same principles she uses in her interiors to her garden, considering proportions, texture and a limited colour palette

1 Use a restrained colour palette. In interiors, I only ever use about two or three colours in a room. Here I have green foliage with pink and white flowers – nothing else. I love hydrangeas. I don't use harsh colours in the garden – I use a muted, knocked-back, dark palette that looks really sophisticated and works with our climate.

2 I can never find outside lights that I like so I put inside lighting, such as a 1960s' pendant light and a plastic John Lewis lamp, outside instead and rewire it. Often people don't realise the power of lighting; it is transformative.

3 Use texture in planting, hard landscaping, furniture and accessories. For me, texture is a major component in interiors and it is just as important in an outside space. How a tree sways; how my bronze pots from Homebase catch in the sun; the featheriness of the mimosa; my old, zinc-topped, Indian table against smooth plastic chairs.

4 I like to put things into people's vision. I haven't put things along the perimeter but I have put them in the middle of the space. This is what I do in small spaces. The eye is so intrigued that it doesn't clock the size of it but how cool it is. I like tricking the eye so you don't know where to look. If you see everything in one go, it's boring.

5 Tying the outside paving with the concrete inside makes the floors look as though they merge into each other, and makes whatever space you're looking into – whether it's the garden or the living room – look bigger.

6 Play around with scale. The minute you put something that's big into a space that isn't very big it immediately looks much grander.

▷ out-of-control, mile-a-minute vine (*Fallopia baldschuanica*)? This vine twines its way along the electric cable for the lighting, wraps itself around the moose head above the fireplace and helps to screen the neighbours' extension.

But what she has created is playful, stylish and endlessly intriguing, with numerous textures and movements of the plants, above and below eye level. "I wanted everything to feel like it had been here forever, all overgrown and tangled," says Abigail. "You have to pull back and push through the plants to find the kitchen."

Abigail blurs the boundaries of exterior and interior. The old paving in the first part

of the garden echoes the concrete in her basement living room. The huge two-storey glazed doors connecting her living room and garden are slightly tinted and reflect the plants and the sky, sliding back to link the two spaces that almost mirror each other.

Then last summer, Abigail found a cabin on eBay for £100, which she installed at the rear of the garden. Linking it to the house is a pathway (made from Millboard composite decking), straddled by grasses *Carex oshimensis* Everest (= 'Fiwhite') and *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Gracillimus'.

"I love spending lots of time out here. I want to feel like I'm in my own magical world – that's the brief I gave myself." □

Clockwise, from top left A pink hydrangea adds a pop of colour in among the green foliage. The trunk of an old grape vine that died is now used for hanging tea-light holders.

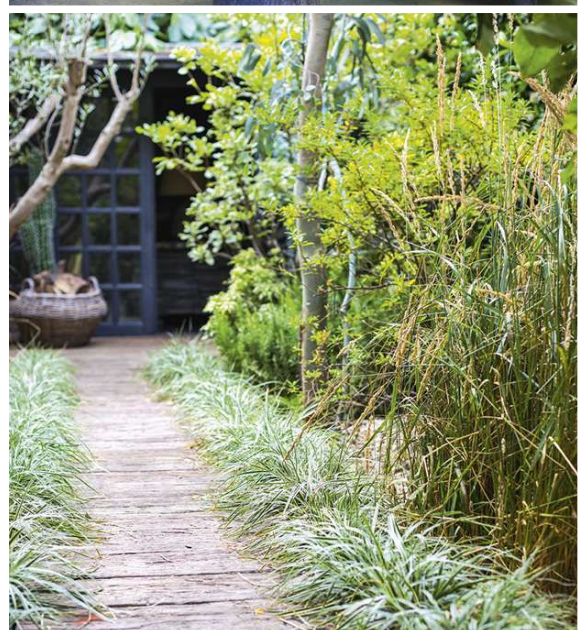
Abigail has gradually filled in the gravel flanking the pathway with planting. The eucalyptus tree trunk on the left makes a strong statement and Abigail loves the height and movement of the plants and trees.

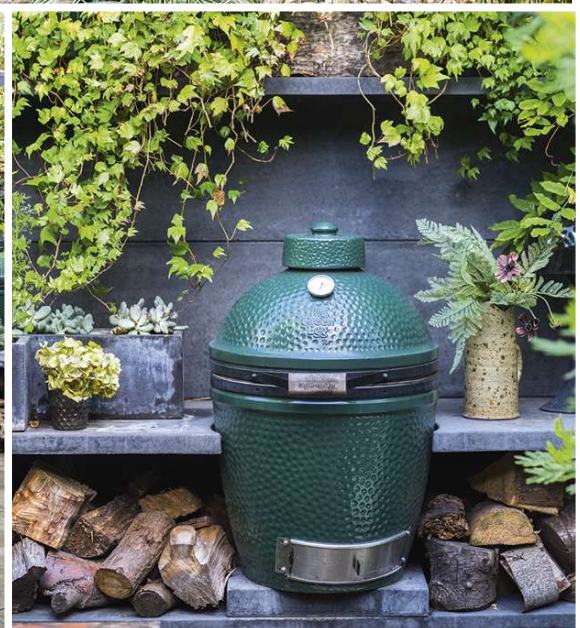
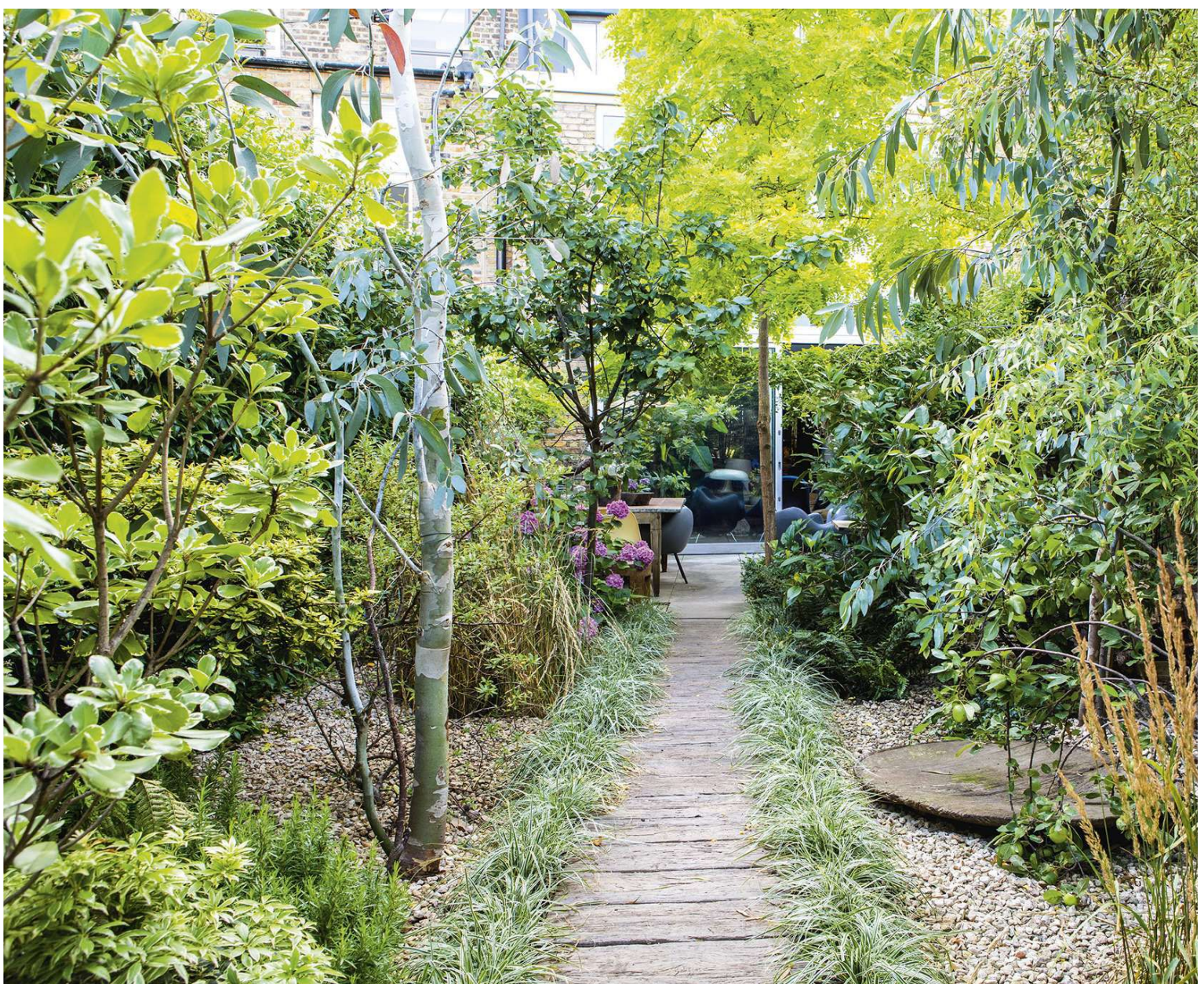
Abigail often uses her WWOO kitchen and her Big Green Egg, even cooking Christmas dinner in it.

The paved area near the house extends Abigail's living space with a kitchen and seating area. The grey chairs are from Abigail's own shop, while the old, zinc-topped, Indian table is from Petersham Nurseries.

Low-growing *Carex oshimensis* Everest (= 'Fiwhite') lines the decking path to the cabin. "I had no intention of using fake wood," says Abigail, "but this Millboard composite achieves the feel I wanted – old and worn in."

The outdoor fireplace, guarded by a statue of a dog, creates a focal point for Abigail's seating area. A driftwood chandelier and white hydrangea help to lift the black table and chair.





A hidden retreat

For a small city garden in Antwerp, designer Koen Aerts has distilled the essence of the gardens his clients love in the South of France, but added a sophisticated Belgian twist

WORDS INA SPERL PHOTOGRAPHS SIETSKA DE VRIES

When you first catch a glimpse of this garden, through the living room doors, your reaction is inevitably “Wow!” Instead of the neat balls of box in terracotta pots you might expect to see behind an elegant 1920s house such as this, there are three, huge, box cushions, which appear almost to cascade into the house; the cushions getting gradually larger until, at the far end of the garden, the largest cushion surrounds the stem of a giant dogwood tree (*Cornus controversa*) like an oversize cuff.

Only when you step out on to the terrace do you realise just how small the garden is – it

measures only seven by ten metres – but although it is enclosed by three walls the overall impression is of an airy, intimate and tranquil space; a place to relax on a sunny day or enjoy a cool drink on a summer’s evening.

“It is an outside living room,” says garden designer Koen Aerts, who, ten years ago, was asked by the owners to create a low-maintenance design to replace the existing muddle of shrubs and concrete. His clients, a couple with three teenage children, wanted to recapture some of the atmosphere of their holidays in the South of France. Koen, however, was adamant that this should be a Belgian interpretation of that style without ▷

Right, top Pots of *Aquilegia* Spring Magic Series on the decked terrace provide a splash of white amid the predominantly green colour palette. The size of the decked terrace is deliberately large – 3.5 x 6m – to create an illusion of space. Eventually, foliage of the vines overhead will join up to create shade in summer.

Bottom row, left to right

Seen from the living room, the box cushions create an eye-catching statement for this small space.

The multifunctional wall is another statement piece; its water feature is perfect for cooling wine bottles.

The strong geometrical design of the low wall is offset by the soft curves of the box cushions.

KEY ELEMENTS

What Private garden.

Where Antwerp.

Soil Imported top soil over building rubble.

Size 7 x 10m.

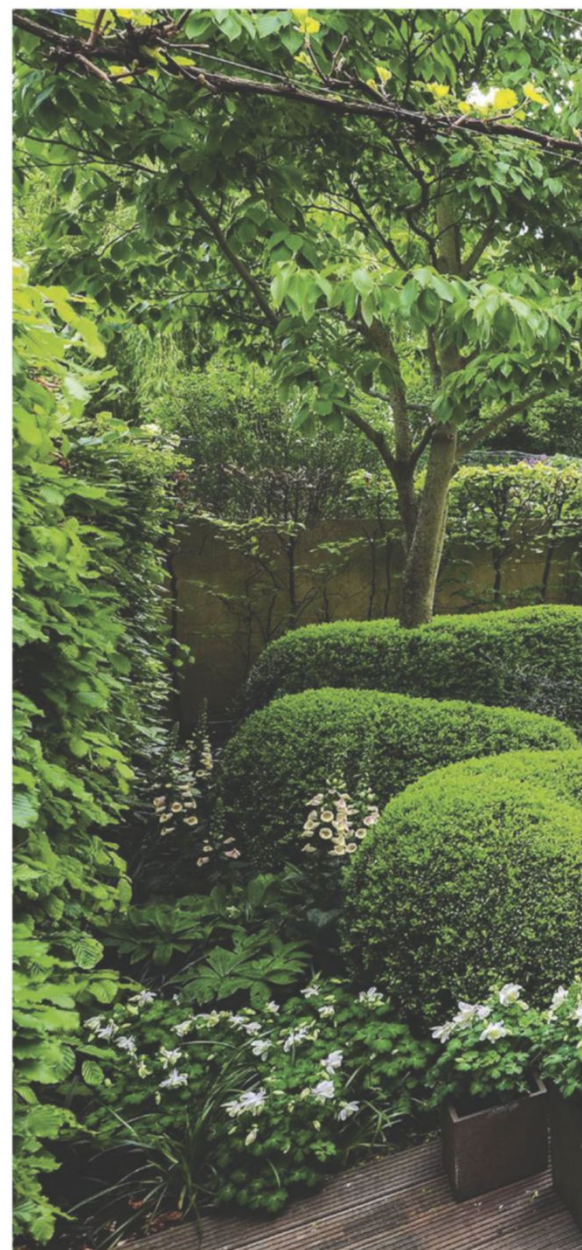
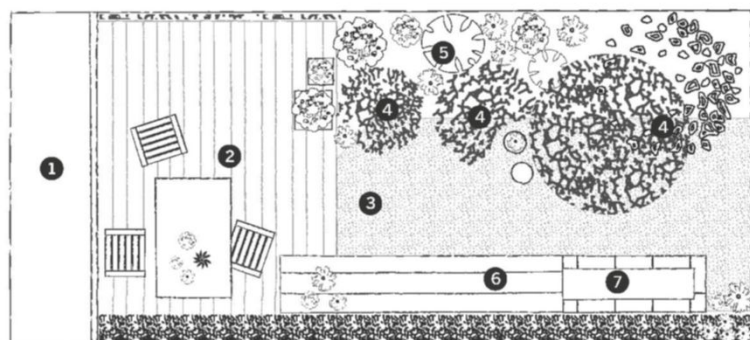
Aspect East facing.

Special features Three box cushions and low stone wall.

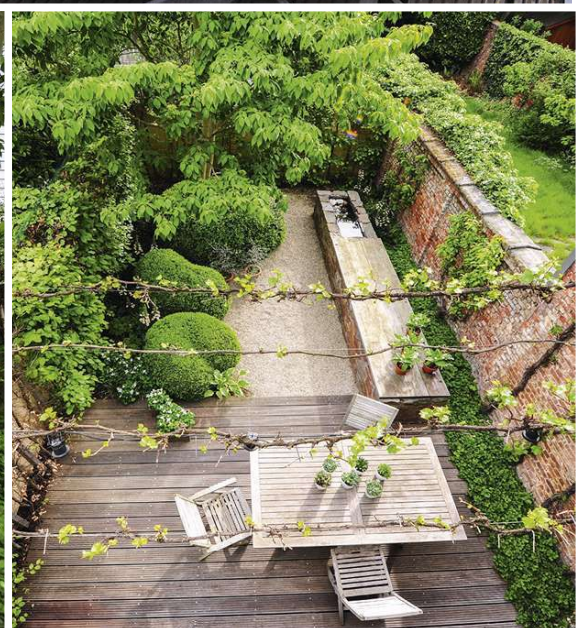
Climate Temperate maritime.

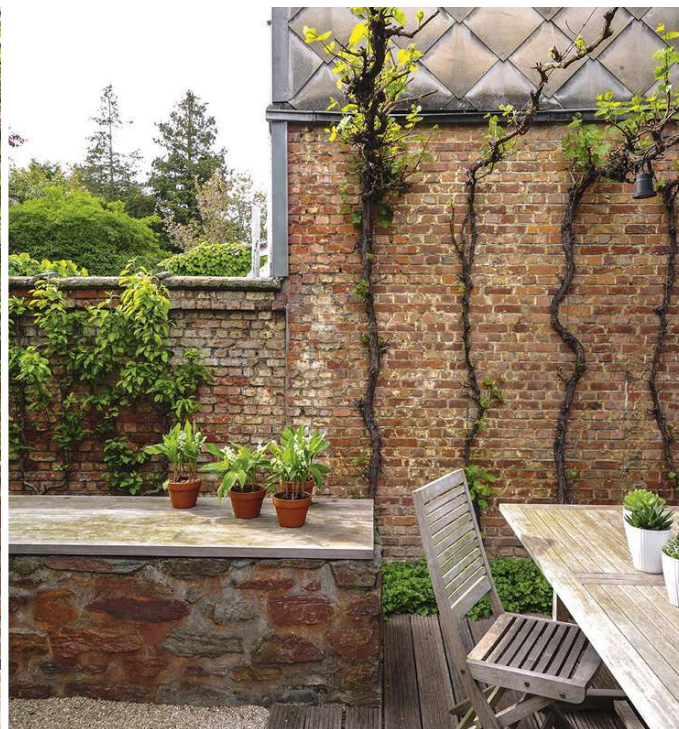
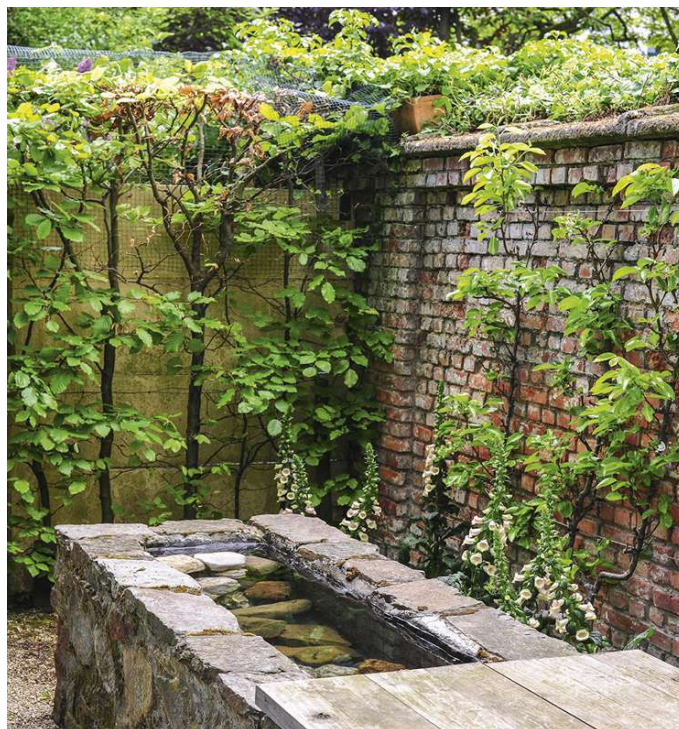
Designed by Koen Aerts (archi-verde.be).

- 1 House
- 2 Decked dining terrace
- 3 Gravel area
- 4 Box cushions
- 5 Planting
- 6 Multifunctional wall
- 7 Water feature



LIAM MCAULEY





▷ resorting to clichés. “We didn’t want to use kitsch, like azure-blue tables,” he says.

Although there is no lawn, simply a covering of fine, quartz-stone gravel, very popular in continental Europe, this is a predominately green garden. As well as creating the dominant box cushions, Koen has covered two of the walls with a beech hedge, while against the third he has planted two Double-U cordon espaliers of *Pyrus communis* ‘Conference’, with a strip of *Waldsteinia ternata* providing dense, green, ground cover along its edge.

Immediately in front of the house is a spacious, decked, dining area, above which three vines – of two local wine grapes, *Vitis*

Above, left to right Elegant foxgloves, *Digitalis purpurea* ‘Camelot Cream’, add simple top note to the predominantly green garden.

Vines grown over the seating area add a real touch of southern France, but Koen has used two local grape varieties to give this feature a Belgian twist.

vinifera ‘Muscat de Flandre’ and *Vitis* ‘Boskoop Glory’ – grow along barely noticable steel wires strung between the side walls.

For such a small garden, the terrace might seem overly large, but it’s one of a few bold elements – including the box cushions, the large dogwood with its airy canopy, and the long, low, stone wall – Koen has used to create an illusion of a larger space. The low wall, with a wooden cover at one end and a water

feature at the other, has quickly become the key focus of the garden. Built in limestone from the Ardennes, which has a red-brown colour to match the brick wall behind, it immediately draws your eye. “Everybody has come to love it,” says Koen. “The family put plates on it, sit on it – even lie on it.”

Despite its diminutive size, the garden does not feel cramped; trees in neighbouring gardens partly hide the surrounding buildings and offer a borrowed landscape from beyond the walls. Every element of this city space – the vines, the gravel, the soft play of light and shade – combine to capture the privacy and calmness of a courtyard garden in the South of France. Exactly what was ordered. □

Big ideas for a small space

Koen Aerts’ five tips for creating a feeling of space

1 Stick to one or two bold elements. as this will make your garden seem larger than if you fill it with smaller items. For example, using large paving stones, of at least a metre square, will create a greater feeling of space than lots of smaller paving stones. Similarly, one big tree is better than several small shrubs and large containers holding dramatic plants work better than lots of small pots.

2 Hide what you don’t want to see. Details that don’t fit with your design will annoy you more in a small garden. Hide any technical equipment, such as wiring or irrigation channels, out of the way.

3 Edit your choices. You can’t fit everything into a small garden, so limit your plants and furniture to a single theme – such as an edible garden or water garden – that reflects your personality and home.

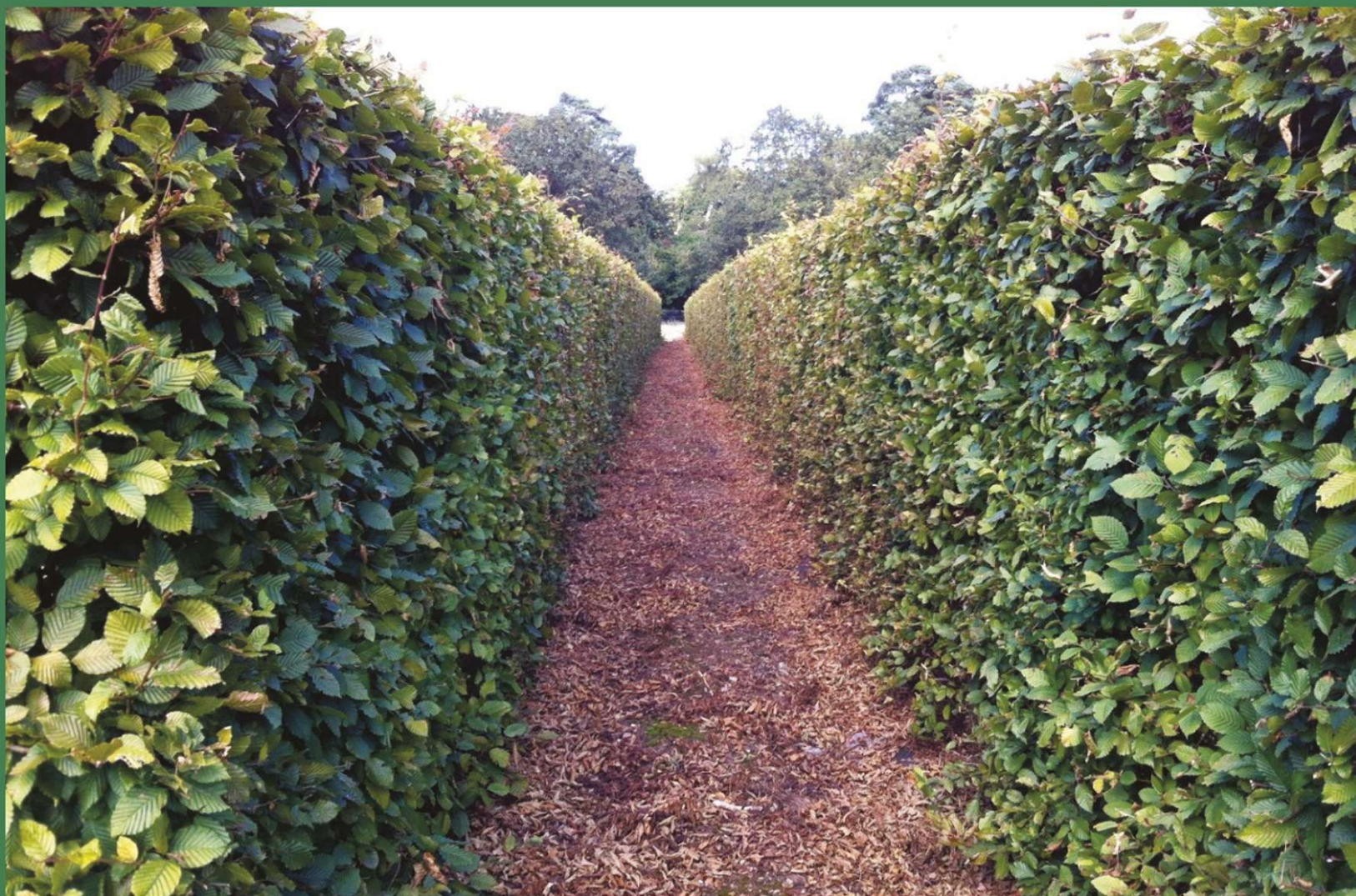
4 Try to link the garden to the house. By using some of the same materials, for example tiles or plant containers, in both house and garden you can create a sense of continuity between interior and outside spaces, making your garden feel like an outside room. Using outdoor cushions and lamps will also help link the two spaces. If you have a conservatory, this can become a useful halfway house, allowing you to combine interior furnishings with more tender plants, such as citrus, to connect with your garden.

5 Aim for a timeless design. Good structure and design should stand alone and not be subject to fashion. Remember design is not the same as decoration; it’s far easier to decorate a well-designed garden, than to fix a badly designed garden with decorative elements.



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Double border

Although the structure of Laura Dingemans' garden was designed by Bert Vermeijden, the planting is all Laura's. Here in this long garden room a narrow strip of mown lawn separates two richly planted borders, each 25m long and 5m wide. Succession planting ensures the borders are in flower from March to October, with a predominantly blue and yellow colour scheme. Here shocks of yellow from plants such as *Hemerocallis* 'Citronella', *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *deamii*, *Helenium* 'Kanaria' and *Solidago* 'Crown of Rays' create a warm sunny feel. At the far end is the White Garden.

In brief

What A private garden consisting of nine very diverse garden rooms.

Where Heerle, the Netherlands.

Size 7,000 square metres.

Soil Sandy.

Climate Occasional heavy rain.

Cool summers, fairly mild winters.

Hardiness rating USDA 8b.

Room to expand

Laura Dingemans knew nothing of gardening when she moved to her home in the south of the Netherlands, but with the help of designer Bert Vermeyden she has created a stunning set of garden rooms that keeps growing

WORDS SIMONE VAN HEININGEN PHOTOGRAPHS ROBERT MABIĆ



y parents thought I was crazy,” says Laura Dingemans of her decision to create a garden in the sandy strip of land that runs through the Dutch province of Noord-Brabant. Laura, who was born and bred in the region, completely understands why farmers like her parents would consider it utter folly to give up clay soil for soil that was basically sand. But in 1975, that’s exactly what she and her husband André did when André’s parents offered the couple the chance to take over their smallholding in Heerle. Although, what little land attached to the house had by then been rented out as allotments, there was a small garden behind the house, on which the couple began to set their mark once they had finished refurbishing the cottage.

“We knew nothing about gardening,” says Laura. “Originally, a friend planted it up with specimens from his tree nursery – conifers, heather and azaleas – but I soon found I liked working in the garden and bit by bit the conifers made way for flowers.”

To improve her gardening skills, Laura joined a gardening club and went on several tours of gardens in the UK. Through these trips she met the Dutch garden designer Bert Vermeyden, and in 1997, asked him to draw up a plan for the site where the allotments had been. “I told him I wanted a series of rooms, through which you could wander, but that I would decide on the planting.”

The result is nine very different garden rooms enclosed and separated by *Carpinus betulus* ‘Fastigiata’ hedges, all 2.2m tall – the Dutch legal limit. As you enter the garden, through two rows of *Morus alba*, your eye is drawn to a small restful room dominated by two, long, lead-lined ponds, surrounded by nothing but *Prunus laurocerasus* ‘Cherry Brandy’ and for colour, pots containing agapanthus. All very simply planted. “I learned my lesson the hard way,” says Laura. “I started out with tiny groups of too many different plants. With experience came larger groups and fewer species, which had more impact, and was more restful on the eye.”

A cobblestone path cuts between the two formal ponds leading to a circle at the heart of what Laura calls her Informal Garden. But turn left at the entrance and you enter a room dedicated to grasses, such as *Stipa gigantea*, brought to life with red and orange accents, ▷





Formal ponds

This small room, dominated by two long formal ponds, links the entrance (on the left), lined with *Morus alba* underplanted with *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle', to the Informal Garden on the right. It's a calm and restful breathing space with pared down planting. Beneath the stark *Carpinus betulus* 'Fastigiata' hedges is a slow-growing ground cover of *Prunus laurocerasus* 'Cherry Brandy', which has white flowers in spring, while four pots of *Agapanthus africanus* add a note of colour and height, and help to underline the simple symmetry of the design.



The Informal Garden

This is the largest room with a far more relaxed feel. A cobblestone path leads you round a large central circle of planting changing to a few metres of decking as it crosses an intersecting circular pond. Here the planting is mostly of shade-tolerant and marginal plants that create a lush almost jungle-like feel. In the foreground the bold leaves of *Darmera peltata* are in stark contrast to the delicate pink flowers of *Anemone hupehensis* 'Hadspen Abundance'. Behind are the purple spikes of *Pontederia cordata* and, beneath the tree, the broad-leaved foliage of *Trachystemon orientalis*.



“I learned my lesson the hard way. I started out with tiny groups of too many different plants. With experience came larger groups and fewer species, which had more impact, and was more restful on the eye”

▷ such as *Hemerocallis* ‘Bonanza’. Laura doesn’t follow the current trend of leaving the grasses in winter. “I cut everything right back in October,” she says. “They tend to fall over anyway and having them out of the way is far easier for weeding or planting bulbs.”

Beyond the Grasses Garden is a small orchard where Laura likes to sit and relax because here, she says, “I don’t see ‘work’ everywhere.” Most visitors to her garden, however, prefer the seat under the *Fagus sylvatica* Atropurpurea Group arbour in the next room. Known as the Purple Garden it’s a mix of purple and grey planting around a diamond-shaped central border. Turn right from here and you find yourself in the large, Informal Garden, first spied from the entrance, with lots of greens and pastels. A lovely *Lythrum* is a picture of health, although Laura has no idea what species it is – “it came here under its own steam” – and its spiky flowers are mirrored by *Pontederia cordata* in the circular pond, while delicate flowers, such as *Anemone hupehensis* ‘Hadspen Abundance’ contrast with the big, bold leaves of *Trachystemon orientalis* and arching sprays of *Pennisetum alopecuroides* ‘Moudry’.

Moving onwards towards the northeastern corner of the garden you reach a long, narrow room, with a grass path between double borders of blue and yellow. Here in the Double Border *Veronica longifolia* ‘Blue Indigo’ happily mingles with *Helianthus* ‘Lemon Queen’. The path, which is mown twice a week, leads to the White Garden. This formal garden with *Ilex crenata* ‘Convexa’ hedges was formerly the Rose Garden, although the hedged beds are no longer home to Laura’s David Austin roses after she decided they were too much work for such ▷

▷ a brief period of colour. Recently, Laura expanded eastwards, to create what she calls the Lane of Desire, which she uses as her 'laboratory' for the rest of the garden. Anything and everything is tried and tested here, from *Dahlia* 'Preference' to *Helenium* 'Moerheim Beauty'. This is a plantswoman's garden and, although she's completely self-taught, Laura soon found herself teaching others. And visitors frequent requests for plants led to her establishing a tiny nursery; happy to share her knowledge, her plants and, above all, her enthusiasm. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Laura Dingemans Garden and Nursery, Herelsestraat 68, 4726 AG Heerle, the Netherlands.

Tel +31 (0)165 301 426.

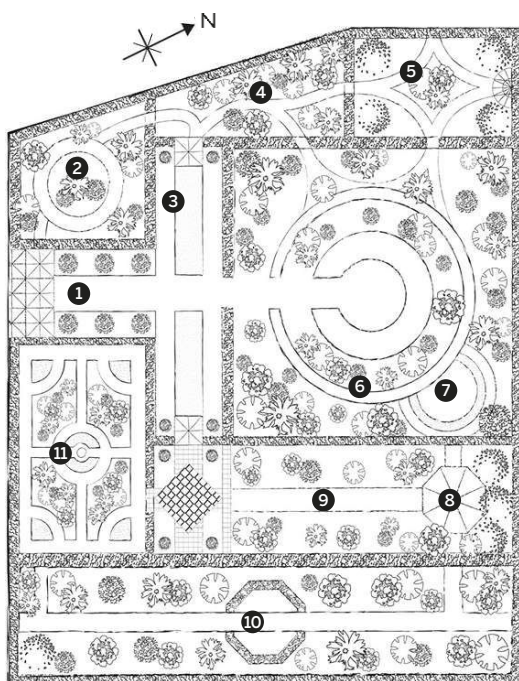
Website www.tuinenlauradingemans.nl

Open 1 April to 1 October, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, 1-5pm, and open days, 24-25 September, 10am-5pm. Group visits by appointment.

Turn over for four combinations ▷

GARDEN PLAN

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1 Entrance, lined with <i>Morus alba</i> | 6 Informal Garden |
| 2 Grasses Garden | 7 Round Pond |
| 3 Formal Ponds | 8 Cobbled Octagon |
| 4 Orchard | 9 Double Border |
| 5 Purple Garden | 10 Lane of Desire |
| | 11 White Garden |





Cobbled Octagon

This octagonal area links the Informal Garden to the newest room in the garden, the Lane of Desire, which can be viewed through the archway cut into the *Carpinus betulus* 'Fastigiata' hedge. To the right is the long double border, starting out with tall clumps of *Phlomis russeliana*, *Solidago* 'Laurin' and *Solidago* 'Crown of Rays' setting the tone. Porphyry cobblestones are a traditional paving material in this southern part of the Netherlands and tie Laura's hard landscaping together. They can be laid in intricate patterns and provide good drainage, but can be slippery in winter.

Combinations

Tall and airy

In the Grasses Garden the large clump of *Eupatorium maculatum* *Atropurpureum* Group (1) adds both height and colour and contrasts nicely with the spiky *Persicaria amplexicaulis* (2). Laura has also added colour with several daylilies, including *Hemerocallis* 'Bonanza' (3), which have grass-like foliage, and their richly coloured flowers match the heat of plants, such as *Helenium* 'Moerheim Beauty' (4), while tall, airy grasses, including *Stipa gigantea* (5) add a lightness of touch.

Straight and narrow

This 50m-long room is the latest addition to Laura's garden. It is known as Rose Lane, because it is where most of the roses from the former Rose Garden ended up, including *Rosa* *Tea Time* (= 'Tanetee') (1) and *Rosa* *Yellow Button* (= 'Auslow') (2). However, its official name is the Lane of Desire, as this is where Laura trials the plants she hopes to use elsewhere in the garden, including *Nepeta* 'Six Hills Giant' (3) and *Agastache* 'Kolibri' (4). With all this colour, the *Sorbus aria* 'Lutescens' (5) provides a perfect, neutral backdrop, and encloses a quiet seating area.

Simply white

The formal *Ilex crenata* 'Convexa' (1) hedging (which Laura considers a great alternative to box) in the White Garden is a reminder that this was originally the Rose Garden. Laura's collection of David Austin roses has long gone, and has been replaced by a fresh mix of the tall tufts of the airy *Molinia caerulea* subsp. *arundinacea* 'Transparent' (2), a ground cover of the grey-leaved *Stachys byzantina* 'Big Ears' (3) and the white-flowered *Gaura lindheimeri* 'Whirling Butterflies' (4).

Purple reign

Known as the Purple Garden, this room, with its central, diamond-shaped border, is home to a subtle mix of purple and grey plants. *Sedum* 'Matrona' (1), with its purple-red stems and changing leaf colour, dominates the left-hand border, while *Heuchera* 'Stormy Seas' (2) grabs your attention along the path, and combines well with the grey of *Santolina chamaecyparissus* 'Nana' (3). Behind *Phlox paniculata* 'Natural Feelings' (4) and *Phlox x arendsii* 'Utopia' (5), in paler shades of lilac and purple, add to the mix.





In brief

What Genus of 19 species of hardy herbaceous perennials with flowers that last a single day. Tens of thousands of cultivars and hybrids have been bred.

Origins Native to meadows in Asia, primarily China, Japan, Korea and eastern Russia. A few species have become naturalised in Europe and in North America.

Season The main flowering period is between July and September.

Size Daylilies vary in height from around 60cm to 2m, although most are less than 1m. Flowers can reach up to 30cm across although many are smaller.

Conditions Hemerocallis are adaptable plants but grow best in moist, fertile soils in sunny situations.

Daylilies

As their name suggests, daylilies flower for only one day, but are so easy going and produce so many flowers – of often spectacular size and colour – they deserve their day in the sun

WORDS JOHN HOYLAND PHOTOGRAPHS DIANNA JAZWINSKI



HEMEROCALLIS 'GREEN LINES'
Large, bright-yellow, pleated petals that have a green throat. The flowers have a strong scent and appear in late July with a second flush in September. Bred in the USA in 2006, this is a tall, imposing plant. 1m. RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b*.



John Hoyland is a plantsman and garden writer who has gardens in both southeast England and southwest France.

Daylily suggests an ephemeral plant that can make only a fleeting contribution to the garden. The botanical name, *Hemerocallis*, is derived from the Greek words for 'beauty' and 'day', reinforcing the idea that this is a short-lived wonder. The flowers do only last for a single day (some merely a few hours) but most daylilies produce dozens of stems with several flowers. The result is a plant that is in flower for weeks on end.

The flowers are certainly beautiful but one of the big attractions of daylilies is their adaptability, growing in sun or partial shade and needing no mollycoddling. Few other plants give such impressive results with such little effort. This easy-going nature goes some way to explaining their popularity. In the UK there are around 4,000 hybrids and cultivars available, but in the USA, where *Hemerocallis* breeding borders on competitive mania, a staggering 80,000 different forms of daylily have been registered by the American Hemerocallis Society. Many have been bred in Florida and are not reliably hardy in northern Europe. The range of flower colours encompasses a wide spectrum, often with two or three colours on the same petal. There are flowers that are circular, triangular, trumpet and star-shaped with crimped, ruffled and twisted petals. These are flamboyant flowers as might be imagined by Vivienne Westwood, in colours and shapes that look uneasy in most European gardens.

Hemerocallis species have more delicate flowers than those of the extravagant hybrids. *H. lilioasphodelus*, which has been grown in Britain since the 16th century, has slender stems and clear-yellow, lily-shaped flowers. Its flowers open late in the day and fill the evening air with their perfume. *H. fulva* has attention-grabbing, orange-red flowers that have an apricot-coloured line down the centre of each petal. In rich soil it can grow to 1.2m tall but is generally half that height. As its name suggests, ▷

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

▷ *H. altissima* is the tallest of the daylilies, measuring 2m high. The lemon-yellow flowers have a delicious honey scent that is strongest on warm, summer evenings.

In the wild, *Hemerocallis* grow in meadows and grasslands from the Caucasus mountains and southeast Russia to the Himalayas and throughout China, Taiwan, Japan and Korea. They are robust enough to hold their own against tough, spreading grasses and perennials. The species, and those with uncomplicated flower forms, are suitable for relaxed, informal plantings among grasses and similar perennials or can be planted in the long grass of meadows. Their fresh-green shoots in spring are a perfect complement to spring bulbs. During the summer the dense linear foliage provides an anchor to more airy and delicate herbaceous perennials. In Munich's Westpark they are planted in large blocks around grasses such as *Miscanthus*. In several of his planting schemes, the Dutch designer Piet Oudolf threads wide ribbons of *Hemerocallis* through sedums, other late-flowering perennials, and ornamental grasses.

Hybrids and cultivars are categorised by *Hemerocallis* aficionados into very precise groups, depending on their flower shape and the pattern of the colours on their petals. In the arcane language of the enthusiast flowers can be sculpted, recurved, polymerous or any one of a dozen other shapes and their colouring might be dotted, dusted, bitone or picotee. One of the classifications that has become popular in recent years is 'spider' daylilies. Technically, these have flowers whose petal length is at least four times the petal's width. In practice they seem to be any flower that has long, narrow petals.

Many spider daylilies evoke in their flower shape the simplicity of the species and sit comfortably in mixed and large-group plantings. Their narrow stems allow them to sway in the breeze, bringing a sense of vibrancy and movement to the garden. In the UK they have been promoted by Pollie Maasz, who holds the National Collection of spider and unusual forms of *Hemerocallis*, all of which are hardy. The spider forms are the result of painstaking work by plant breeders yet they still retain the essential relaxed elegance of the species from which they derive.

• John's recommendations for daylilies continue over the next six pages.



HEMEROCALLIS 'TWISTED FIRESTARTER'

A seedling that appeared in Pollie Maasz's nursery in Hampshire. The scarlet petals, as its name suggests, curl under and twist around. The flowers are 20cm wide. 1m. RHS H6, USDA 6b-8b.



H. 'CHIEF BLACK HAND'

A late-flowering hybrid with dark-mahogany, rounded petals that are a contrasting gold colour at the base. Has a reputation for being very free flowering over a long period. 1m. RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b.



H. 'BLACK PLUSH'

Popular in the USA since its introduction in the 1950s, the deep-burgundy flowers have a dark-red sheen that evokes velvet. The centre of the flower is golden yellow. 90cm. RHS H6, USDA 5a-10a.



H. 'CLEOPATRA'S WINE'

Its flowers are 20cm wide in an unusual plum colour with a large, pale-yellow, star-shaped centre and a slight scent. The petals have crimped edges and twist as they age. 90cm. RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b.



H. 'LONG STOCKING'

Vibrant, carmine and yellow flowers in July and again in September. The individual flowers can be as wide as 25cm on tall stems making a dramatic statement. Evergreen foliage. 1.2m. RHS H6, USDA 6b-8b.



H. 'DANCING SUMMERBIRD'
Lightly scented, pale lilac-lavender
flowers with a chartreuse throat.
The edges of the petals are slightly
crimped. A neat, compact plant.
60cm. RHS H6, USDA 3b-9b.



H. 'PTERODACTYL EYE'

A recent introduction that produces masses of huge flowers, up to 25cm wide, on tall, arching stems. Flowering starts in late July and continues until early September. 1.2m. RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b.



H. 'CERULEAN STAR'

Although the flowers, at 18cm wide, are large, the soft hues of the pale-lavender petals make this a distinctive and elegant daylily. The flowers tend to open late in the afternoon. 90cm. RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b.



H. 'WEBSTER'S PINK WONDER'

A plant that lives up to its name being both a rather lovely pink and having quite wondrous flowers that are an improbably large 33cm wide and are an astonishing sight. 1m. RHS H6, USDA 4a-10b.



H. 'CRUISE CONTROL'

Dusky-pink flowers with recurved petals that have a great throat. Although the flowers are a large 17cm wide, this hybrid has a dainty appearance. The flowers are sweetly scented. 1m. RHS H6, USDA 6b-8b.

Cultivation

- Daylilies have a reputation for being undemanding plants that will grow anywhere. It is true that they will cling on to life in poor soils, but to thrive they need fertile, moist soils and a sunny position. To give your daylilies a good start, prepare the site by digging plenty of organic matter into the soil before you plant them and then, once established, mulch them with compost each autumn.

- Mulching is particularly important for large-flowered hybrids as these need lots of energy to produce their flowers. A low-nitrogen fertiliser, applied in spring, will help the plant to produce flowers. Regular deadheading during the flowering season is necessary to keep the plant looking clean. Plants grown in shade will produce fewer flowers than those grown in sun.

- After a few years, clumps will become congested and produce fewer flowers. Dig the plant up, split it into pieces no more than 20cm wide and replant immediately. Unlike most herbaceous perennials, daylilies can be divided at any time of the year as long as the ground is not frozen.

- Daylilies have a midge, the *hemerocallis* gall midge, which lays its eggs in buds early in the year. When the eggs hatch, the larvae eat and destroy the flower. You can recognise the affected buds by their fat, rounded shape. Pick them off and destroy them. The pest is most active early in the year, so later-flowering cultivars aren't as affected as early flowering ones.

Cooking with daylilies

Daylilies have been a popular ingredient in Chinese and Korean cuisine for centuries. The dried buds are sold in supermarkets throughout Asia under names such as Lilybud and Golden Needles and are used to flavour stews and soups or, rehydrated, used in place of fresh ones.

In Europe we have been slow to consider their culinary potential but

they do occasionally appear on the menus of daring chefs.

Their short shelf life means you are unlikely to find them in your local supermarket or even at a farmers' market. If you want to try them fresh, pick the buds before they begin to show the colour of the flower and cook them immediately. Sautéed in a light olive oil they have a fresh, peppery taste. Some people liken the taste to well-seasoned asparagus. The buds can also be steamed or stir-fried or eaten raw in salads. During the summer, the flowers can be added to salads (bringing more colour than taste) or stuffed like courgette flowers.

I have seen in some Asian cookbooks, recipes for daylily flowers deep fried in a tempura batter, something that is starting to appear on British restaurant menus. Some Asian recipe books also suggest using the young, juicy roots, but digging them up would obviously reduce the number of plants in your garden.

Societies

- **The American Hemerocallis Society**
daylilies.org
- **British Hosta and Hemerocallis Society**
hostahem.org.uk

Where to buy

- **A La Carte Daylilies**
A daylily breeder and nursery on the Isle of Wight. Sells its plants via mail order only.
alacartedaylilies.co.uk
- **Pollie's Daylilies**
Mount Pleasant Lane,
Lymington SO41 8LS.
Tel 01590 682577,
polliesdaylilies.co.uk
- **Strictly Daylilies,**
2 Primes Corner, Histon,
Cambridge CB24 9AG.
Tel 01223 236239,
strictlydaylilies.com
- **Wootens of Wenhamston,**
Blackheath, Halesworth,
Suffolk IP19 9HD.
Tel 01502 478258,
wootensplants.co.uk



H. 'CORAL SPIDER'

Sweetly scented flowers that are a sophisticated dark apricot with a creamy-gold central rib down each petal, and a golden-yellow throat. The flowers are 20cm wide. 1m. RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b.



H. 'LACY MARIONETTE'

Shining, yellow flowers that have a pale-green throat. The petals are extremely narrow and curl under at their tips. Flowers are 17cm wide on short stems. 60cm. RHS H6, USDA 5a-10b.



H. 'EMERALD LADY'

An early flowering cultivar with strongly scented flowers. The base of the petals are bright green, which blends well with the pale yellow of the flower. The edges of the petals are crimped. 90cm. RHS H6, USDA 4a-10b.



H. 'JURASSIC SPIDER'

This is a popular hybrid with pale, faded pink flowers that have a yellow centre. Starts flowering in June and continues into August. It is slow to increase. 80cm. RHS H6, USDA 3a-9b.



H. 'LOIS BURNS'

A long-flowering cultivar that will produce blooms from July until the end of September. The petals furl back tightly as the flowers age. 75cm. RHS H6, USDA 5a-10b.

Didier Wirth

The founder of the European Institute of Gardens and Landscape on raising the status of gardens in France and why the Burgundy landscape can still stop him in his tracks

WORDS TIM RICHARDSON PORTRAIT CHARLIE HOPKINSON

The cross-channel ferry is a pleasingly old-school way of getting to France, and the six-hour crossing from Portsmouth to Caen, in the Calvados region of Normandy in northern France, proves as smooth as the proverbial water feature. It's still light as I disembark at 9pm on an August evening, and Didier Wirth is waiting to greet me. Tall and urbane, distinguished yet friendly, he mentions that he woke that morning on one of the Greek islands and has spent all day travelling home to Normandy for our meeting.

Before taking me back to his own house we drop by another château in this corner of Calvados. The Château de Bénouville is where Didier works (some of the time) as it contains the offices of the European Institute of Gardens and Landscapes, the organisation he set up in 2013 and is now energetically fostering after a career in the pharmaceuticals business ('retired' does not seem an appropriate word to use about Didier, though he is now in his mid seventies).

Didier's own home of the past 24 years is the Château de Brécý, a pretty, mansard-roofed château dating from around 1630. As night falls he shows me with justified pride the avenue of trees he replanted to create a fittingly grand entrance drive. Directly behind the façade is a gem of a terraced garden, realised spatially in the spirit of the Italian Renaissance, though its detail is more typically French.

The next morning we rendezvous in a tapestry-covered salon, and Didier takes me on a tour of the garden and then – something I had heard about from garden-history colleagues – his superb library of antiquarian garden and architectural books. He seems to have every modern book on gardens, too, and when I present him with the French edition of one of my own recent tomes, he looks at me quizzically. (Of course, he already owns it.)

It transpires Didier's grandfather was a former French prime minister, so perhaps unsurprisingly Didier had a classic establishment background, attending military academy and then university, where he studied mathematics, before teaching himself chemistry as preparation for joining his father's pharmaceutical firm. "My grandfather told me: 'Never go into politics.' I was tempted once – but then I remembered."

From his grandfather Didier inherited a love of the Burgundy landscape. "As a boy I spent holidays at his Burgundy house, learning how to swim and fish. It's granite country, with small hills, meadows and forest – beech mainly, but some oak. It's pretty wild – the woods are full of wild boar and mushrooms. It's my landscape, and wherever I drive in Europe I always stop the car if I see something like it."

As a businessman, Didier established research laboratories in California and Ireland as well as France, before selling up to a

multinational in 1999 at the age of 58. Unshackled from business, Didier was ready to pursue a lifelong interest in architecture, which his father had forbidden him to study as a young man. But life took a different turn when his late wife, Barbara, who had amassed a serious collection of garden books while still in her twenties, joined the International Dendrological Society, which promotes the study of trees. "I was furious when I discovered I was not allowed to join my wife on an expedition to British Columbia. The form said 'consorts not allowed'. So I became a member. And then I started to get interested myself, and eventually became vice president."

With admirable Gallic candour Didier remarks: "I have a great love of grand avenues of trees." But his interest in gardens more generally began to burgeon, nurtured initially through book collecting. When he and Barbara took on the semi-derelict Brécý the first thing they did was build the library in an old barn overlooking the courtyard.

A natural leader and well connected, it was not long before Didier was prevailed upon to take charge of the local gardens organisation in Normandy and a few years after that, the national federation, which he hugely expanded, adding 13 new regional associations. This in turn led to the Institute, his latest venture.

"Napoleon once said, 'Gardens are a distraction for bankers' – the idea behind the Institute was to try to convince the French public that the garden is an important subject," Didier explains. "We had no funding for a base in Brussels or Strasbourg, so we created the Institute with the local authority here in Calvados." In fact, Didier himself part funds the Institute.

Its first aim is to create a huge online database that can be searched to find information on everything from specialist nurseries to historic garden sites across Europe. There is also potential for a physical archive of European garden plans and drawings – the Château de Bénouville was until recently the base of the region's accounts department and has two miles of shelving, currently empty.

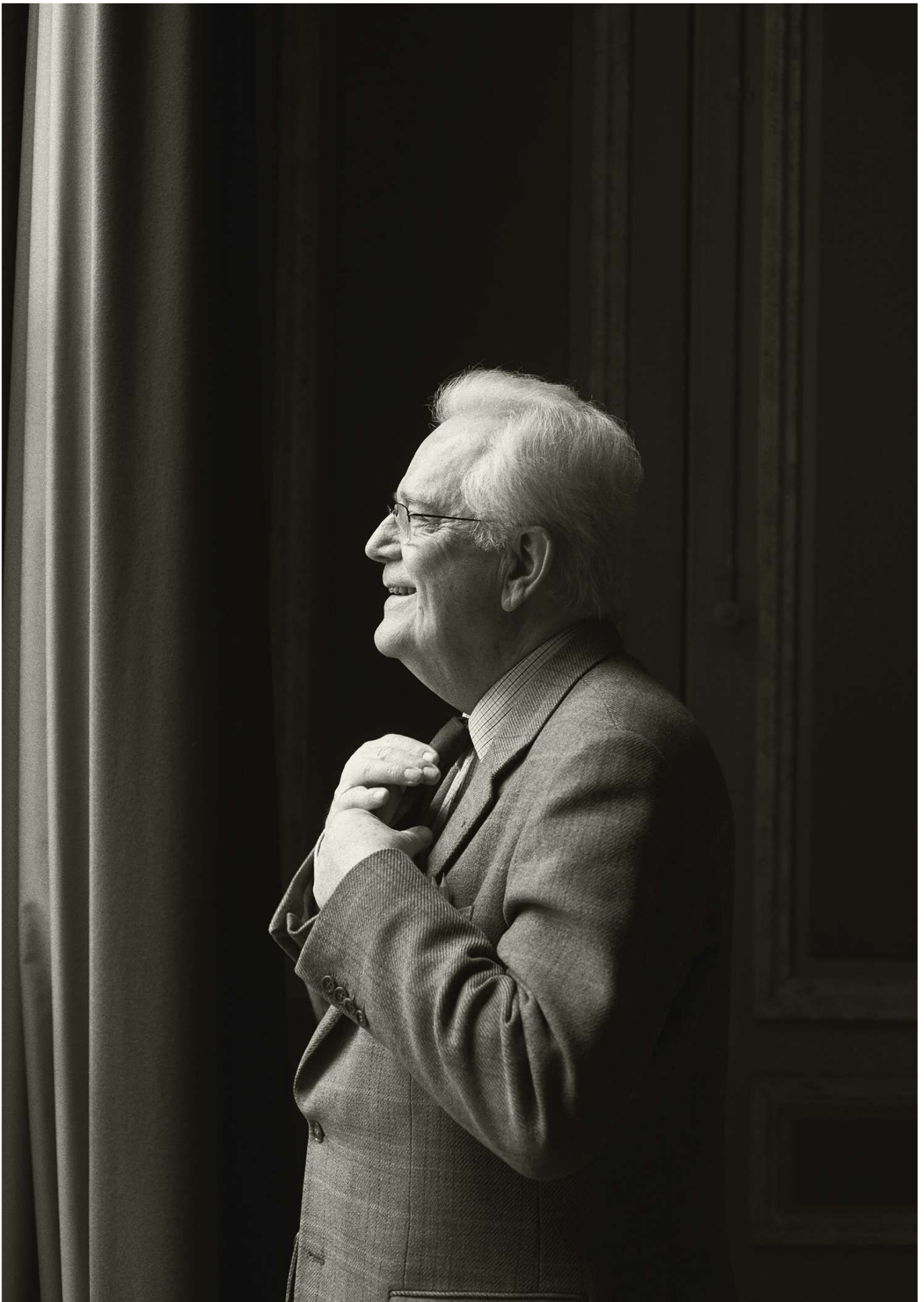
Those empty shelves are perhaps symbolic of the potential of this organisation. And if anyone can pull it all together, Didier can. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Institut Européen des Jardins et Paysages, Château de Bénouville, BP 13, 14970 Bénouville, Calvados, France.
Tel + 33 (0)2 31 53 20 12, europeangardens.eu

NEXT MONTH Twigs Way, garden historian and writer.

"My grandfather told me: 'Never go into politics.' I was tempted once – but then I remembered"





In brief

Name Allt-y-bela

What Designer Arne Maynard's own garden with strong structure and colourful planting.

Where Monmouthshire.

Size Five acres.

Soil Loam and clay mix on top of clay

Climate Sheltered, sun trap but with heavy rainfall.

Hardiness rating USDA 8.

The last hurrah

In the final instalment from his series, designer Arne Maynard observes growth in his garden slowing down and concluding in one more flourish

WORDS ARNE MAYNARD PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM



Three multi-stemmed quince trees were planted to enclose the kitchen garden from the hillside. Beyond them is a stream that forms a boundary and beneath the trees are beehives, ensuring Arne has pollinators for the kitchen garden.

Towards the end of August the rate of growth seems to abate and a comfortable easing of pace permeates the garden. It feels completely different to early summer, when growth is fast and furious, stopping and starting with the irregularity of the weather. At that point, in every direction, fresh, acid-green foliage forms a foil for the emerging flowers, which are heady in their glory but often fleeting in their presence. By late summer, it's a different palette of plants – spires of agastache and pepper-scented phlox, musky salvias, tall sanguisorbas with tiny dense heads on waving wiry stems, the daisy flowers of heleniums and rudbeckias, grasses and the just-emerging asters (to name a few). They all somehow feel more sturdy, less affected by sudden storms than the midsummer peonies and iris. Added to this, you have the repeat flowering of plants such as hardy geraniums and astrantias that have been cut back earlier in the season and are in their stouter second flush. As well as this robustness, there is a longevity to the late summer border, with many species flowering until the frost, and lots of them forming beautiful seedheads for winter. The plants in August seem to be storing up the last of the sunshine and drawing nutrients out of the soil, so that they can form all the wonderful buds and roots for the year to come.

The feeling of this pace abating is especially strong in the kitchen garden, which is fruiting and flowering most magnanimously after all the frantic sowing and transplanting, the watering, pampering and protecting that happens earlier in the year. It's not that there is a halt to those activities, as new seeds must still be sown to form ►

1 Over the entrances to the kitchen garden pear arches provide a great deal of fruit while taking up only a small area of the bed below. They add to the sense of arrival and provide a key vertical element to the design.

2 Our large raised beds are subdivided into 1m-wide strips across which we grow short rows of produce. The size of the beds allows crops to be replaced easily as they are harvested. They are particularly useful for successional rows of lettuce, which are continually picked throughout the season.

3 Every year we make new structures for the plants to grow up. Using a mixture of coppiced hazel rods and willow to bind them, the four-sided arches were formed to span the intersections between the crossing paths. The sculptural forms give height and structure to the garden.

4 We make use of every growing opportunity in the kitchen garden, growing cultivated blackberries on the hazel fences and 'step-over' apples at the edges of the raised beds. The hooped hazel structure covered in net is to protect the brassicas from cabbage white butterfly.

5 Below the kitchen garden, a mature unnamed cultivar of apple tree was planted at the new ground level after earth was removed from the back of the house to create a lawn. The apple was chosen for the way it holds on to its fruit late into the winter.

6 A wrought iron gate that is waiting to be placed in the garden has become an impromptu support for the cucumber plants to scramble up. Next to it, the sweet corn tassels – as decorative as any flower – hang over the surrounding borage and *Dahlia* 'Café au Lait'.









▷ robust plants for next year, cuttings are being taken, and preparations made for autumn plantings. Fruit trees must be pruned but the timescales are different. We're no longer rushing to grow crops that will be affected by missing a crucial day or two's sunshine. What we sow now is going to mature over a much longer period. There is also seed to collect and, of course, produce to harvest but, if anything, the bustle has moved inside – to the kitchen. We preserve the garden's abundance by making chutneys and jams, jellies and juices, often making use of many windfall apples in the process, allowing us to enjoy the rewards of our garden during the winter and into next spring.

There is a wonderful number of flowers available for cutting for the house too, in particular sweet peas and dahlias, which I grow in the borders as well as the cutting garden. Every year I try different varieties of dahlia, then I lift and store my favourites so I can plant them in pots and propagate them by taking cuttings in the spring. I am always keen to do new trials and try different combinations, so I keep my stocks from overflowing by giving away colours and forms that I don't want to use again next year.

In my own garden it's good to have the freedom to experiment in a way that I can't in a client's garden. I am constantly making tweaks and changes to the planting and for this point in the season I usually grow some summer-flowering bulbs, such as gladioli, and a few different late-flowering annuals or perennials in pots so that I can plant them into the borders to plug any gaps, or sometimes to add a fresh ▷

1 *Lobelia x speciosa* 'Hadspen Purple' is a long-flowering cultivar that grows to about 80cm high. Beloved by bees, it offers late-summer nectar and is a useful spire to contrast with the dahlias in a cutting garden or a border.

2 The flamboyant *Dahlia* 'Vancouver' has a huge flower and requires staking. We make hazel supports that are like open-ended baskets to prevent the sodden flower heads causing the plant to collapse to the ground in heavy rains.

3 Creamy whites are much easier to use in mixed plantings than stark whites, and *Dahlia* 'Café au Lait' (1.2m high) is a superb warm, cream colour with a hint of peachy pink at the centre. Large flowered and opulent, it is particularly lovely as a cut flower.

4 Roses planted in long grass need to be strong growers to cope with the

competition around them. This example, *Rosa* 'La Reine Victoria', is only just strong enough to take on the grass but it's so lovely that it is definitely worth the effort of clearing around the base a couple of times a year.

5 *Dahlia* 'Avignon' (60-70cm high), with flowers the size of dinner plates, is another gentle colour that mixes well with other varieties. These large flowers have a great volume in the cutting garden and feel in proportion with the maturing vegetables, especially the large kales in the kitchen garden.

6 *Dahlia* 'Nuit d'Été' (1m high), is a classic dark 'Cactus' type dahlia. Reliable and vigorous, this is one of the darkest-flowering dahlias and is wonderful for cutting for the house, which makes it a popular choice at the moment. It is one I like to mix with green or bronze fennel in the border too.

▷ accent throughout the space. This year I added the rich purple *Lobelia x speciosa* ‘Hadspen Purple’ to my cottage garden border, which brought a vibrant, vertical punctuation to the planting. To manage this movement of plants and trialling of plant combinations, we concentrate on labelling plants at this time. We mark them so we can make changes for next year – tagging them to be divided, or moved, maybe swapped with another cultivar, or lifted to make space for something new.

It’s at this point in the year that the garden starts to feel more closely linked to the wider landscape again; the intensity of the garden itself is diminishing and the flaxen tones of the adjacent meadows and grazed fields are becoming the dominant colours. Within the garden it’s the hues of a harvest festival – russets and oranges, deep reds, purples and lilacs – that feel most at home. They catch the soft light in the evening and the morning particularly beautifully. Returning from summer trips away, I notice it’s not only the grasses that are turning blonde; the colour of the light has changed too. When the sun is lower in the sky and the shadows longer, the garden is suffused with a graceful, pale, golden light. And as the direction and colour of the light changes, so does the temperature of the air. While we still have warm days, mornings and evenings are fresh with moisture-rich air, and the dew returns. The meadows are cut short when the seed has ripened and dropped, and the short grass, moistened by these dews, will soon be turning from gold to green again. □

• Find out more about Arne’s work and details of his courses at arnemaynard.com

1 At the back of the house, the meadow is rich in flowers during the summer and later it is full of seedheads. They dry to a rich cinnamon colour, in contrast to the verdant mown grass of the rising driveway, which leads to the kitchen garden and the cut grass banks. I love the moment of greatest contrast shortly before the meadow is cut, after which it quickly becomes an even, clipped green surface and remains this way throughout winter.

2 Four years ago I planted a dense orchard of apples, and my plan was to keep the trees tightly clipped. As well as being delicious, red apples such as these *Malus domestica* ‘Lord Lambourne’ are wonderfully decorative, their crimson hues popping out against the backdrop of green foliage and bringing atmosphere to the orchard.

3 A cluster of three clipped beech topiary have been gradually obscured by the grass surrounding them, which has been left to lengthen since spring. At the end of the summer it’s wonderful to see the sharpness of their lines revealed once more when we give them their final trim to keep them in shape over winter. In a few weeks the beech will begin to turn golden brown, and will hang on to those golden leaves until the fresh new growth pushes them off the branches come spring.

4 When the time comes, we cut the meadows with an Allen scythe, then rake the grass into rows and make small domed hay stooks to allow it to dry. This has become a ceremony that marks the end of the summer, celebrated with the rows of domes, which look like topiary marching across the common.





Near the entrance to Sichtungsgarten Weihestephan is a low wall that was built, I am told, because the garden's founder Richard Hansen wanted students to be able to get in after hours. An opportunity I have taken myself, more than once. This pragmatic gesture sums up the spirit of Weihestephan: there is so much to see here, it would be quite unreasonable to restrict visitors too much.

Sichtungsgarten Weihestephan, which is linked to the Weihestephan-Triesdorf University of Applied Sciences, is Europe's leading research and teaching garden. It all sounds very serious, but Weihestephan does an extraordinarily good job of making the serious beautiful. Laid out in the late 1940s by landscape architect Alfred Reich, the garden's basic plan sounds severe – a series of 3m-wide rectangular beds between wide grass paths – but the planting is so dense that strolling along the borders you are rarely aware of the overall pattern, and looking diagonally across the beds, all you can see is a field of perennials, grasses and occasional shrubs, held within a girdle of surrounding sheltering trees.

The garden was founded in 1947 by Richard Hansen (1912-2001) as a centre for horticultural research. Hansen had been a pupil of the charismatic nurseryman, plant breeder and writer Karl Foerster (1874-1970), who did much to establish Germany's position as the leading perennial-growing nation, and was hugely influenced by him. From its inception, Weihestephan's objectives were to discover those species most worthy of cultivation. But as well as trialling the best species and cultivars, Hansen's research also focused on finding the best places to plant them and their most suitable planting partners. This focus, on creating planting combinations that work together, ecologically, was at the core of Hansen's approach. At Weihestephan there are several dry and woodland areas that illustrate how his ideas on plant communities can be applied to less than ideal environments.

Hansen's work on ornamental plant communities has been hugely influential among German gardeners, and his successor Peter Kiermeier, who took over as garden director in 1978, took Hansen's work even further by adding an aesthetic dimension to the scientific enquiry. Kiermeier was a ▷



In brief

Name Sichtungsgarten Weihestephan.

What Research, teaching and trials garden, linked to Weihestephan-Triesdorf University of Applied Sciences. One of the biggest collections of perennials in Europe, including habitat gardens, innovative combinations and research plots.

Where Freising, Germany.

Size 12 acres.

Soil Neutral loam.

Climate Continental temperate, regularly down to -20°C in winter, 80cm annual rainfall.

Hardiness rating USDA 6a.

Breaking barriers

Sichtungsgarten Weißenstephan, is Europe's leading research and teaching garden but effortlessly manages to disguise its serious intent behind the beauty of its planting

WORDS NOËL KINGSBURY PHOTOGRAPHS CLAIRE TAKACS

Sichtungsgarten Weißenstephan manages to combine serious research with beautiful planting, as in this border where *Arundo donax* and *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Comet', frame a mix of hardy, half-hardy and annual plants.

▷ lover of English gardens and the colour theories of Gertrude Jekyll, and introduced colour-themed borders to the central area of the garden, placing far greater importance on balancing plant form and texture.

The garden's current director, Bernd Hertle, took over in 2006 at a time when many gardens were trying to reduce costs. As a result, several of Hertle's programmes have tried to quantify levels of maintenance, and in particular he has been looking at labour-saving methods, such as mulching or the machine-cutting of perennials.

"One of our new projects is a garden meadow, that combines slower-growing grasses with perennials, to minimise maintenance," says Hertle. Plant trials also form a large part of the garden's work, and these Hertle admits, can take up to five or six years. "The first year and a half is to establish the correct names," he says. "After that we evaluate the plants for four years, at several locations across Germany."

Although this is very much a research garden, it completely avoids the sterile feel of a research plot. The spirit of the place is fertilised by the buzz of excited chatter from garden visitors and the youthful enthusiasm of students. No doubt some of the students who creep in over the low wall after hours do so after a few bottles of beer from the local Weißenstephaner Brauerei – the world's oldest brewery – but once here they cannot fail to be entranced. It is one of those places where information about plants and plant communities can be absorbed almost effortlessly. It is also a wonderful place to appreciate the incredible diversity, vibrancy and sheer quality of German horticulture. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Hochschule Weißenstephan-Triesdorf, Weißenstephaner Gärten, Am Staudengarten 7, 85354 Freising, Germany.

Tel +49 8161 71 4026 (mornings only).

Website hswt.de/en

Open 1 April – 31 October, daily, 9am–6pm. Admission free.

• You can find out more about Sichtungsgarten Weißenstephan and contemporary German planting in general at gardensillustrated.com

Turn over for four planting combinations ▷



The exotic foliage of the maple-leaved *Ricinus communis*, a tropical plant grown as an annual, dominates this border, along with the half-hardy *Canna indica* 'Schwabenstolz', one of many dark-leaved, red-flowered cannas.

Although this is very much a research garden, it avoids the sterile feel of a research plot. The spirit of the place is fertilised by the buzz of excited chatter and the enthusiasm of students



Combinations

These four plant combinations from Sichtungsgarten Weißenstephan are suitable for any reasonable soil in full sun. They illustrate the kind of perennial plantings that are characteristic of contemporary German design.



Autumn glow

By August, the yellow-green flowers of *Euphorbia palustris* (1) that gave this plant its moment of glory during early summer, have gone and the leaves are now developing the early stages of its autumn colouring. Here the golds and reds of its foliage pick out the blue-purple of *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae* 'Violetta' (2) and the yellow of *Rudbeckia subtomentosa* (3), providing several weeks of vibrant colour combinations. All three are long-lived perennials that flourish in fertile, moist soils.



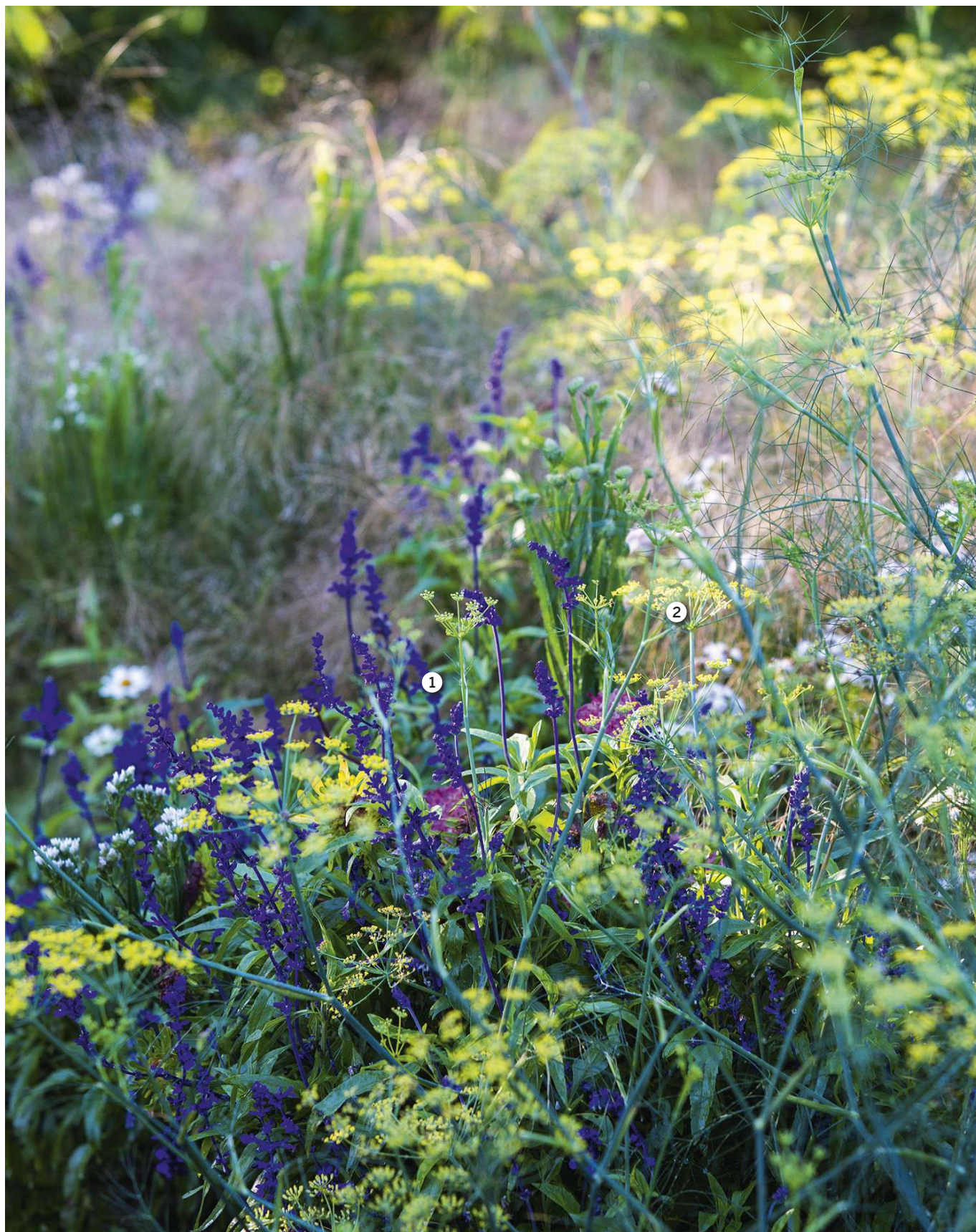
Sunny side up

Glebionis coronaria (1) and *Nicotiana sylvestris* (2) set the cool theme of this yellow and white border. A larger number of small annuals are used to fully explore this combination, including *Zinnia elegans* 'Benary's Riesen White' (3) and *Antirrhinum majus* 'Rocket White' (4). In contrast are the darker tones of two perennial grasses, *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Undine' (5) and *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Graziella' (6), which will provide winter interest and continuity from year to year.



The colour purple

The rich colour of the short-growing *Symphotrichum novi-belgii* 'Pacific Amaranth' (1) sets the tone here, continued by the taller annual *Verbena bonariensis* (2) and complemented by the pink of *Sedum* (Herbstfreude Group) 'Herbstfreude' (3), the latter's seedheads will be a focus in early winter. Meanwhile the white of *Symphotrichum lateriflorum* 'Chloe' (4) lightens the mix and acts as a counterpoint to the dark foliage of shrub *Cotinus coggygia* 'Royal Purple' (5).



Acid test

This lovely combination mixes the blue of *Salvia farinacea* (1) with the acid-yellow of *Anethum graveolens* (2). The salvia is a perennial but grown here as an annual. If started early from seed, it flowers from midsummer to the first frosts. *Anethum graveolens* (the herb dill), with wispy leaves and acid-yellow umbels of flowers, is a short-lived annual, but in moist and fertile soil it will flower long enough to complement the salvia's solid blue spikes.

Dancing with joy

In just 16 years former choreographer Bob Foltz and his partner Andries Bierling have turned their passion for plants – and collecting salvias – into a thriving business and one of the Netherlands' most renowned nurseries

WORDS JOHN HOYLAND PHOTOGRAPHS MAAYKE DE RIDDER





Andries and Bob's collection of 140 different forms of salvia includes the tall, purple-blue *Salvia* 'Indigo Spires', here grown through the acid yellow of *Anethum graveolens*.

Left A set of salvaged wrought-iron gates makes an attractive entrance to the nursery's well-stocked sales area, which is filled with beds of stock plants and display gardens.



18 of Andries and Bob's favourite salvias

1 *Salvia* 'Hot Lips'

A floriferous, shrubby salvia that has become very popular in recent years. The flowers are entirely red during the hottest part of the summer and become a bicolour red and white as the temperature cools. 1m. AGM*. RHS H5, USDA 7a-10b†.

2 *S. oxyphora*

Happy in full sun or part shade, this is a spectacular salvia with velvety coral-red flowers in late summer and autumn. It needs to be overwintered in a greenhouse or grown each year from cuttings. 1.2m. USDA 8a-10b.

3 *S. patens* 'Guanajuato'

Although the same intense blue of the species, the flowers of 'Guanajuato' – and the whole plant – are much larger. It forms a tuber rather like a dahlia that is hardy on well-drained soils. 1.2m. RHS H3, USDA 8a-10b.

4 *S. 'Nachtvlinder'*

This shrubby perennial, from the young German breeder Frank Fischer, is one of the best introductions of recent years, with small, beautiful, dark-maroon-purple flowers over a long period. Hardy in well-drained soils. 75cm. AGM.

5 *S. atrocyanea*

Bob and Andries love this imposing salvia, with its tall stems that arch over so that the 30cm-long flower spikes are almost horizontal. Flowers from August to October. It is hardy in mild areas. 1.8m.

6 *S. x jamensis* 'Melen'

A compact plant with pale creamy-lemon flowers with a russet top lip. Flowers from June to September if it is regularly deadheaded. 50cm.

7 *S. splendens* 'Go-Go Purple'

Generally used as an annual bedding plant, it produces dark, plum-coloured flowers on exceptionally tall flower spikes from June to September. 1.2m.

8 *S. greggii* 'Icing Sugar'

Shrubby perennial with bicoloured flowers in two shades of pink, and one that will rebloom after deadheading. Loves a place in full sun, but capable of withstanding winter temperatures to around -12°C, if planted in a dry, well-drained soil. 80cm. USDA 7a-10b.

Turn over for more favourite salvias.

Twenty-five years ago Bob Foltz was a renowned dancer and choreographer and Andries Bierling had a successful career in public relations. Today the couple are the owners of one of the most important plant nurseries in the Netherlands and the holders of the Dutch collections of *Salvia* and *Echinacea*.

This unlikely metamorphosis started when Bob helped out for a few weeks at a bedding-plant nursery and realised that growing plants was what he wanted to do. "As soon as I started growing and propagating plants I knew that this is what I wanted to do with my life," says Bob.

At the end of the 1990s, after eight years of partnership in the nursery where Bob had originally worked, the pair decided it was time to have their own nursery. "Bob had become known for the collection of salvias he had established and for his range of unusual perennials," say Andries, "so it felt the right time to have our own nursery."

The pair eventually found an old farmhouse with nine acres of land in the far north of the Netherlands, close to the German border. "There were no trees except for a couple of old fruit trees, no greenhouse, no tunnels," says Bob. "It was scary and exciting. To start from scratch was in a way very inspiring." The pair bought the property in October 1999, spent the winter clearing the ground and in February were ready to plant the stock beds with mother plants. "When we planted there was snow on the ground," remembers Andries. "It was slightly crazy but by March we were open to the public."

Sixteen years later the stock beds are exuberant and teeming with plants and there are tunnels and greenhouses bursting with healthy plants. Two-and-a-half thousand kinds are propagated on the nursery. In addition to the Dutch national collections there are large collections of species pelargoniums, woodland plants and, more recently, epimediums.

The nursery's display garden is centred around an enormous *Catalpa bignonioides*. Paths of crushed shell radiate from the tree and enclose island beds, and the whole garden is flanked on two sides by a beech hedge. The end of the garden is separated from a meadow by a hazelnut tunnel. The echinacea are

Right from top The brick barn that adjoins their home was renovated by Andries and Bob and now houses a shop selling another of the couple's passions: bric-a-brac and antiques.

Nursery owners and plantsmen Andries Bierling (left) and Bob Foltz with their dogs, mother and daughter, wirehaired pointing griffons, Zibbie (left) and Tee.

Sixteen years ago the nine-acre site was a bare field. All the trees that now provide structure and shade in the nursery were planted by Andries and Bob.





▷ planted in large groups with grasses of a similar height. “This is the way we have seen them growing in North America,” says Andries. “Not only does it look beautiful but the grasses do not overcrowd the echinaceas in the way that other perennials do.”

The hardy types of the nursery’s 140 forms of salvia are planted in the garden among other perennials, while the tender ones are overwintered in the greenhouse and stood out during the summer. Andries and Bob explained that many more salvias are hardy than is generally thought. Both *S. atrocyanea* and *S. guaranitica* are hardy on their well-drained soil. The shrubby sage, *S. microphylla* regrows in their garden even after severe winters.

Bob and Andries are attracted to salvias by the beauty of the flowers; by their long-flowering attributes and by their adaptability. They point out that while the majority of the genus need lots of sun and a well-drained soil others, such as *S. uliginosa* and *S. flava* var. *megalantha*, prefer moist soil and some will thrive only in shady situations.

The newest part of the nursery garden is an atmospheric woodland walk, carved out through the trees planted 15 years ago, which is filled with drifts of epimediums, hostas, pulmonarias and other woodland plants. It is here that they are planting those salvias at home in dappled shade, particularly *S. glutinosa*, *S. forsskaolii* and *S. digitaloides*.

Their collections of plants are eclectic. “That’s because we grow the plants that appeal to us, plants we like,” says Andries. “At first we were both attracted by salvias so we started collecting them. I love the shape of echinacea flowers and so that collection started.” Bob adds: “Yes, we are collectors, but what drives us is our passion for plants, growing the ones that appeal to us. We are doing the work we like to do with the plants that we like. What we do we do to fulfil our dreams.” □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Tuingoed Foltz, Hereweg 346

9651 AT Meeden, the Netherlands.

Tel +31 (0)598 635 000.

Website tuingoedfoltz.nl

Open Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-5pm. First and third Sunday, of every month, 11am-5pm.

Left from top The nursery produces about 2,500 different plants, mostly propagated by Bob and his assistant. The pathways are lined with plants for sale.

Island beds close to the sales area are planted to demonstrate to customers how grasses, hardy perennials and tender salvias can be grown together.

The couple’s latest interest is in plants for shade and a new woodland garden is taking shape. They now produce a wide range of epimediums, hostas, podophyllum and arisaema.

9 S. ‘Javier’

A shrubby salvia with bright-green foliage that is evergreen in mild areas. The blue-mauve flowers have a white throat and are produced from May to November. Hardy in well-drained soils. 70cm. AGM.

10 S. Ember’s Wish (= ‘Sal 0101’)

A recent introduction from Australia with glossy, dark-green foliage and masses of scarlet flowers from June until the first frosts. It will grow in part shade but is not hardy. 80cm.

11 S. forsskaolii

Perennial salvia with coarse, triangular foliage and, from June to September, branched stems of violet-blue flowers that have a white base. Grows best in shade in well-drained soil. 60cm. USDA 5a-11.

12 S. uliginosa

Known as the bog sage because of its need for moist soil, it has very tall stems of kingfisher-blue flowers at the end of summer and into the autumn. 1.5m. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 6a-10b.

13 S. californica

A tender perennial with a sprawling habit of many fine, wispy stems that are packed with gentian-blue flowers. Flowering begins in June and will continue to the frosts. 80cm. AGM. RHS H2, USDA 10a-11.

14 S. ‘Amber’

The result of crossing *Salvia flava* var. *megalantha* and *Salvia glutinosa*, it has branching stems of pale-yellow flowers that have a chocolate-coloured lip. Best in shade, it will flower from June to October. 80cm.

15 S. ‘Amistad’

A floriferous, shrubby hybrid with dark-purple flowers and almost-black calyces. If regularly deadheaded it will flower from June to October. Needs to be overwintered in a cool greenhouse. 1.2m.

16 S. ‘Nel’

Bred at the Foltz nursery as part of their pursuit of a shrubby salvia with blue flowers. It has lavender-blue flowers on wiry stems throughout the summer until the first frosts. 50cm.

17 S. blepharophylla ‘Painted Lady’

Dark stems of brilliant scarlet flowers on a compact and upright plant that flowers from June to September. Will survive mild winters in a sheltered position but is best overwintered in a greenhouse. 40cm. USDA 9a-11.

18 S. ‘Wendy’s Wish’

Glossy, dark-green foliage and an abundance of magenta-pink flowers on beetroot-coloured stems from July to October. Looks best when grown in part shade. Will not survive winter outdoors. 90cm. USDA 9a-11.



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design

Design update, ideas and sourcebook

UPDATE COMPILED BY ANNIE GATTI

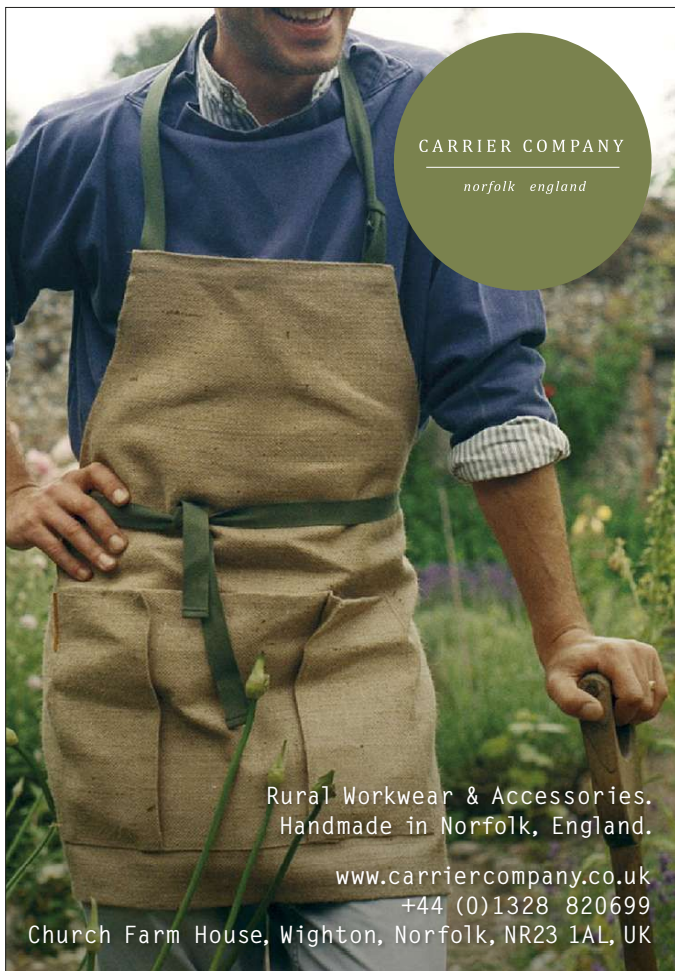


COMPETITION

Rainbow power

NuGen has revealed the five shortlisted design ideas for the screening mounds that will surround its nuclear power station at Moorside in Cumbria. They include a community water park (right) with sculptural landforms; an ecologically rich, science-inspired park, with undulating earthworks, grassland habitats and an open-air amphitheatre for events (above); and a series of interlocking landforms with watercourses and tarns in between, set within a framework of woodlands and wildflower pastures. Details of the shortlisted projects can be seen at moorside.landscapeinstitute.org





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CULTURAL CENTRE

Mapping the green City

The inaugural exhibition at City Centre, a new cultural centre for the City of London, celebrates some 34 of the City's hidden green spaces, such as Portsoken Street Garden (pictured). A horticultural map of 32 existing gardens and two that are in development has been created by floral artist Rebecca Louise Law [issue 235, page 62], using flower stems on the ceiling. Three films explore 12 of the gardens in more detail and a map, which is also available as an app, pinpoints each location. Check the website for tours of the gardens throughout the summer. thecitycentre.london



NEW PARK

Learning curves

As part of its masterplan for a new campus, the University of Manchester together with Landscape architects Planit-IE have created plans for Brunswick Park, a new four-acre green space bisected by a public pedestrian and cycle route. It will be landscaped with ornamental trees, herbaceous perennials and meadow areas sown from seed and will include a central space for large-scale campus events. planit-ie.com

RESTORATION

History in action

Yalding Gardens in Kent, formerly the display gardens for Garden Organic, have been restored and replanted by the new owners. Divided into 16 areas, the gardens demonstrate planting styles through the ages, and include an area of orchards and a large fruit garden. The gardens and restored barn, which is available for hire, will open on selected dates. thegardensyalding.co.uk





FESTIVAL

Natural art

The Art, Cities and Landscape Festival in the French city of Amiens has added ten new works to its collection of gardens and installations sited along the city's waterways. Made by young landscape architects, designers and artists under the age of 36, this year's projects include *Egilope* (left), a floating wheat field that moves with the current, and *Jardin des Cimes*, a billowing aerial net of willow and poplar leaves in a grove of trees. Until 16 October. maisondelaculture-amiens.com

FRYING DOWN TO RIO

It may look like it's holding the Olympic flame, but this stylish, scorched-black steel bowl on a Corten steel base is a new outdoor grill from the Netherlands. Launched in the UK at the Chelsea Flower Show, the Ofyr grill uses seasoned wood for fuel and allows you to cook for at least 30 people at a time, as well as making a stunning centrepiece. Available in two sizes with prices starting at £1,450. ofyr.co.uk



FESTIVAL

Inner piece

Le Caveau, a space enclosed by four walls of stacked gabion by Swiss landscape architect Christian Poules, is one of five new installations selected for this year's International Garden Festival at Reford Gardens, near Quebec, Canada. These walls enclose a suspended surface on which plants are growing, creating a meditative space that focuses on the beauty of nature. The festival runs until 2 October. refordgardens.com

Notebook

- **The Savage Garden** is a new development at the National Trust for Scotland's Inverewe Garden in Wester Ross where carnivorous species including the Venus flytrap are the attraction. A raised bog has been created for the trumpet plant *Sarracenia flava*, and other species are displayed in a Wardian case. nts.org.uk

- A **residential topiary course**, led by expert James Crebbin-Bailey, is suitable for all levels of expertise, and includes cutting techniques and tips on care and maintenance, and pests and diseases. Missenden Abbey, London Road, Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire HP16 0BD. 25-26 August, £190 (includes accommodation and meals). topiaryarts.com

- Designer **Dan Pearson** is charting the development of his Somerset garden, and writing about the wider world of horticulture, landscape, food growing and producers, at digdelve.com

- **Capel Manor College** in Enfield is offering a new degree in Garden Design and Plantsmanship. The course takes two years full-time or four years part time, and starts this September. capel.ac.uk

- Book now for the **Alitex annual lecture** by BBC presenter and garden designer Joe Swift at Torberry Farm, South Harting, Hampshire GU31 5RG. £10, 15 September, 8pm. Call 01730 826900 or email enquiries@alitex.co.uk

- You can also book for a lecture by London College of Design director Andrew Fisher Tomlin that explores the design elements of the **Sussex Prairie Garden** and how aspects of this garden can be recreated at home. 24 September, 10am-12.30pm, RHS Garden Wisley, Surrey GU23 6QB. Tel 020 3176 5830, rhs.org.uk

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1 Stepping up

This building is almost too good to be true, in a mellow-mossy, finialed-Cotswold-loveliness kind of way. It is the perfect crescendo to the trickling stream, time-worn stepping stones and casually scattered primulas and ferns. This bog garden, at Cotswold Farm in Duntisbourne Abbots, is possibly not one of the most exciting, but is certainly one of the most enticing.



LYNN KEDDIE/GAPPHOTOS

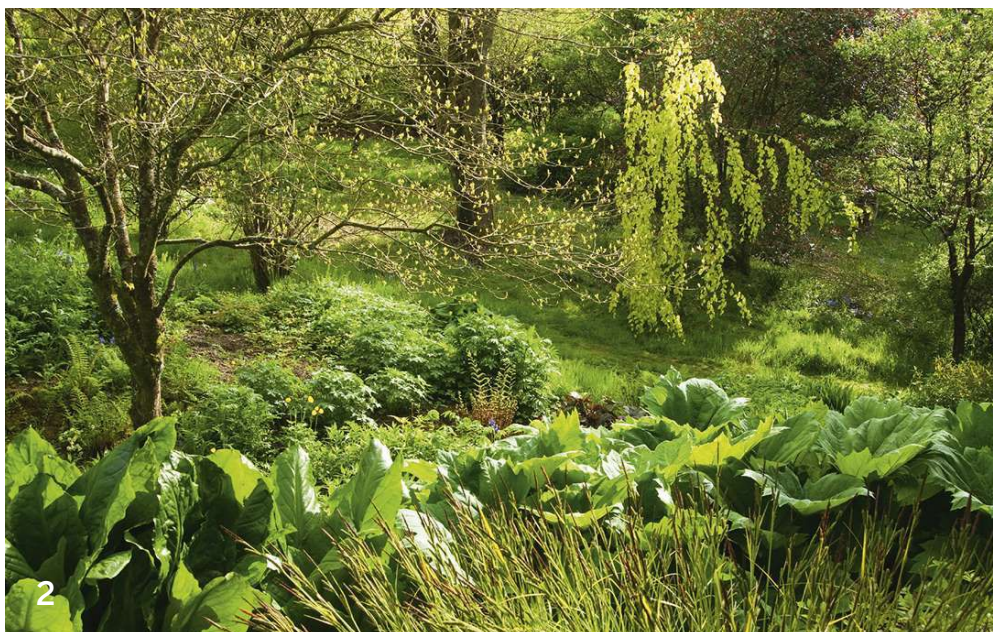


James Alexander-Sinclair is a garden designer, writer, broadcaster and founder of into-gardens.com. He has served on the RHS Council for the past five years.

Swamp fever

Bogs tend to get a bit of a bad press, evoking visions of mud-soaked messiness, but James Alexander-Sinclair thinks a little soggy is something to celebrate

WORDS JAMES ALEXANDER-SINCLAIR



2 Clotted dream

Devon is remarkable not only for its coastline and the quality of its clotted cream but also for its gardens. The congenial (though damp) climate contributes to the general fecundity of the plants and lushness of the vegetation and so it is a natural home for some of the finest bogs in the country, such as here at Marwood Hill Garden near Barnstable.

3 Yakety yak

This is an Asian yak meadow. The yaks tend to be a bit inhospitable so that is why there are none in the photograph. What there are, however, are hundreds of amethyst-coloured *Primula secundiflora* and yellow *Primula florindae* that love the cropped grass and damp conditions at the foot of the hills.



4 Enemy within

This is a cunning bit of bog work. Take a massive outbreak of a seriously invasive weed – in this case *Equisetum arvense* (or mare's tail) – and turn it to your advantage. Rather than harrying it with chemicals or worrying it with shovels, embrace what is – undoubtedly – a very beautiful weed by adorning it with other things.

Bog is not a good word. It is onomatopoeia at its least appealing. Bog. Sounds leaden and soggy. It reminds me of wet walks and soaking socks: of long-buried prehistoric hunter gatherers, boot-sucking mud and water the colour of stewed tea. One thing is sure from that description, you wouldn't want one in your garden. Except that gardening is all about finding silver linings to even the most dingy of clouds and you would want one if you had an ounce of sense – which obviously you do or you would not be here. Let me try to convince you with two good reasons: firstly because you will then be able to grow plants that you have never grown before (which is often the main reason why people garden), but secondly because it allows a little bit of childish fantasy to intrude upon your garden. A bog garden can be the closest a temperate gardener can get to jungle with the constant moisture

and fertile soil prompting massive growth from all number of exotically oversized plants.

So, having established the general desirability of a bit of bog, I suppose it might be helpful to quantify what I mean. Most bog gardens work best in a bit of shade – ideally overhung by trees. The feeling you want is one of coolness and general lushness surrounding what is basically a bit of permanently wet ground that contains little or no visible water. If you are lucky enough to have a troublesome bit of garden that drains badly then this is the ideal opportunity to turn what was an annoyance into a gem. It can be a soggy bit of ground on the edge of a stream, for example. I am very familiar with a particular burn on the Isle of Colonsay, one part of which is a rushing torrent the colour of caramel (because of the peat), but to one side is a damp tributary along whose banks grow big, bright clumps of *Lysichiton* ▷

5 Natural inspiration

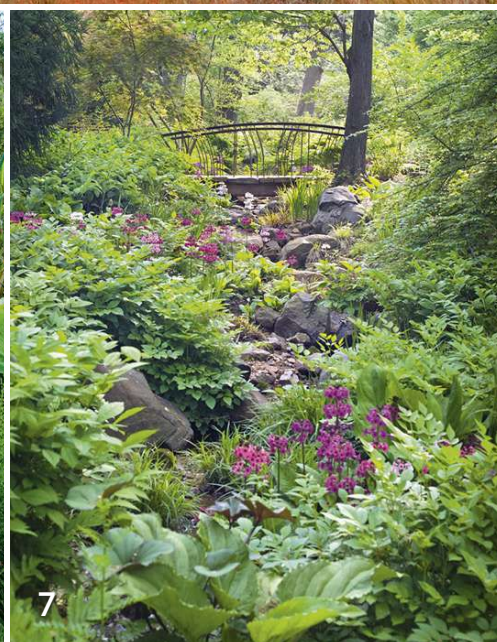
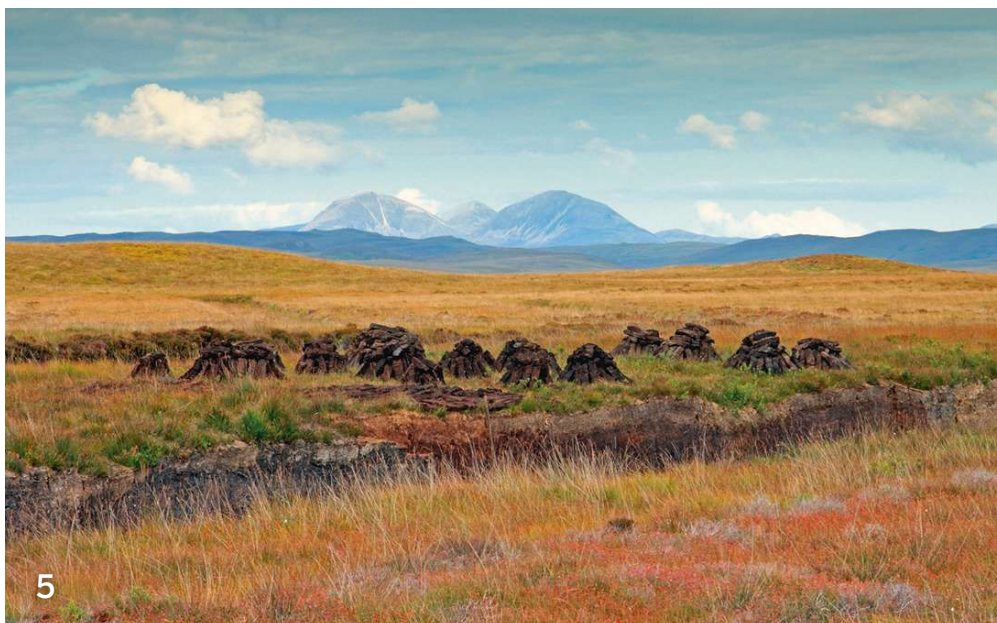
This natural bog on the Scottish Isle of Islay, is a much subtler thing, with multifarious mosses in tones of green, brown and reddish khaki spiked through with tufted rushes and mohicans of sedge. Wild, beautiful and slightly dangerous: probably best not to try to emulate this at home; unless you have a very large garden.

6 Reflected glory

At Dyffryn Fernant in Pembrokeshire [featured in next month's *Gardens Illustrated*], owners Christina Shand and David Allum have added an artistic twiddle to the bog garden by putting a stainless steel obelisk just at the end of a narrow path to reflect the surrounding abundance and general lushness.

7 Hill start

This bit of Chanticleer Gardens – an amazing 35-acre garden in Pennsylvania, USA – is called the Asian Woods. It was formerly a scraggy hillside full of poison ivy but is now richly planted with Korean, Chinese and Japanese natives. The bridge was made by a local craftsman, Doug Randolph, from copper pipe masquerading as bamboo.



PLINTH/PIOS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO, JONATHAN NEED/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO, ANDREA JONES

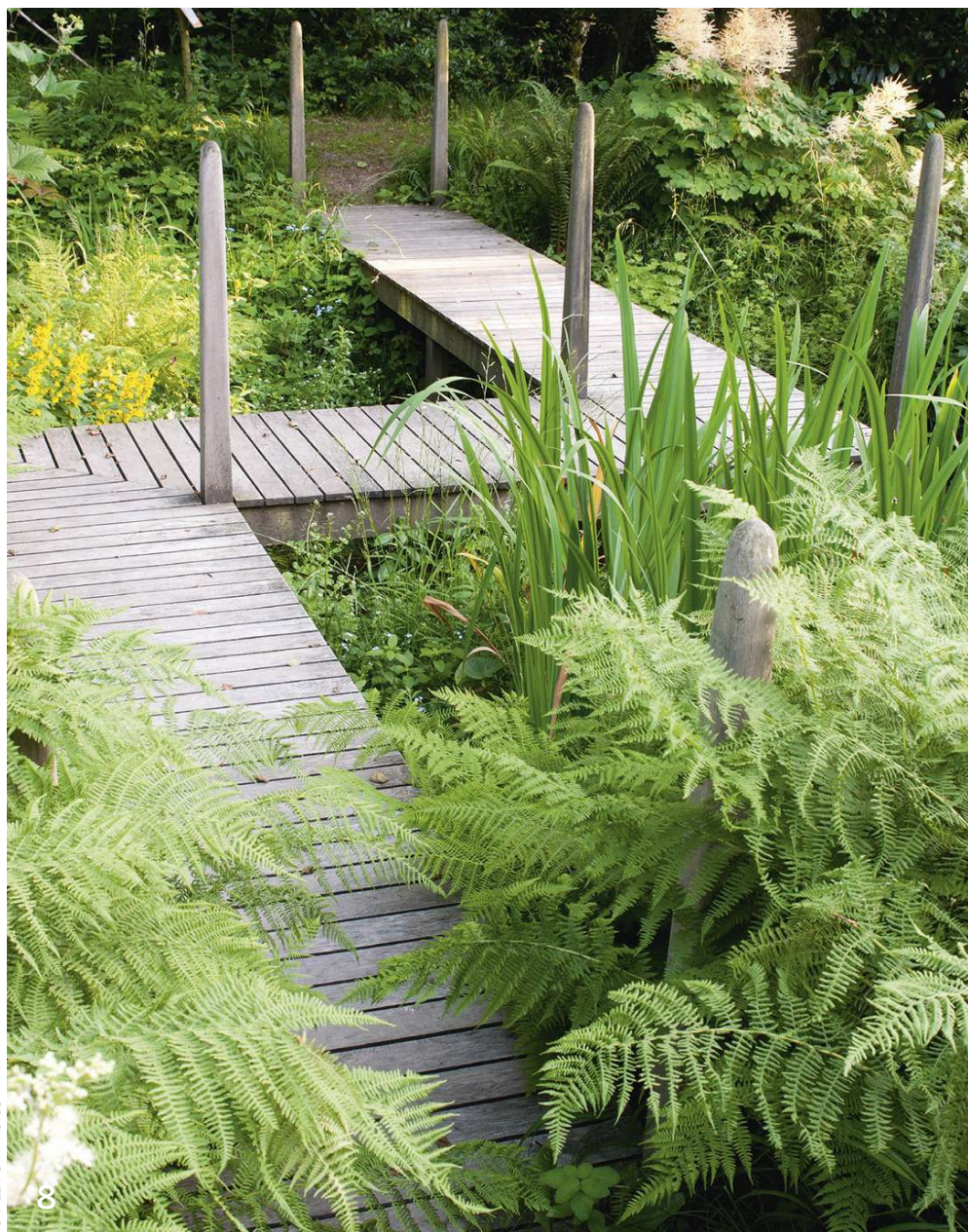
▷ *americanus*. This is one of those plants that is more fascinating than beautiful: the flowers nestle within a big yellow spathe, which serves two purposes: firstly as protection and secondly to attract the attention of pollinators. It is as if the plant was waving a big flag while jumping up and down singing sea shanties. And if that is not enough, the flowers smell of decay and corruption in order to make itself completely irresistible to the flies and beetles it needs for pollination. It can be eaten, but only in times of desperation. This is the sort of plant that would be weird in a border but is perfect in the slightly sinister hinterland that is the bog garden. Or Bog Garden as I think it deserves the capital letters.

However, if you live in a part of the country that is not blessed by either natural streams or decent rainfall (there are bits of Essex, for example, that appear to have less rain than they have in Addis

Ababa) there are still ways to create a bit of boggishness – that may well not be a real word but it should be. It is quite simple to extend an existing artificial pond to incorporate a small pocket that is always wet but never flooded. Similarly, if the fancy takes you it is equally simple to dig yourself a dedicated bog garden fed by cunningly redirected rainwater downpipes.

A Bog Garden doesn't have to be big – I have seen a tiny wet patch in a small garden bulging with *Darmera* and flag iris – and similarly not all the plants have to be big bruisers. I remember hearing Stella Rankin of Kevoek Garden Plants in Scotland talking about saturated Asian meadows glinting with multicoloured primulas. So take a bog any way you wish: it can be either *Jurassic Park*, *Hound of the Baskervilles*, lush wetland or any combination you fancy.

Bog. Still sounds a bit pants but can be spectacular in reality. □



FIONA LEA/GAP PHOTOS

8 Different angle

In the words of The Drifters: '(Under the boardwalk.) We'll be havin' some fun...' In this case it might be more sensible to stay above the boardwalk as it is from there that you will get the best view. I like the slight wobbliness of a wooden path and the way running footsteps resound against the timber although the designer has tried to discourage too much running by putting in a series of right angles to slow down progress allowing you to get the best from the planting.

Further reading

Alan Titchmarsh How to Garden: Water Gardening by Alan Titchmarsh (BBC Books, 2013).

Managing the Wet Garden: Plants That Flourish in Problem Places by John Simmons (Timber Press, 2008).

Timber Press Pocket Guide to Water Garden Plants by C Greg Speichert and Sue Speichert (Timber Press, 2008).

Great plants for a bog garden

Gunnera manicata The big mama of all bog plants. Only plant it if you have lots of room as the spiny stems and leaves are enormous (up to 2m across).

Hostas Of course. Big, lush leaves in glaucous blue or subtle variegation. Bit slug prone but that's life.

Iris pseudacorus This is the classic native flag iris such as you will see flourishing on pond margins throughout Europe.

Matteuccia struthiopteris No bog garden would be complete without a fern or two and this shuttlecock fern is a good choice. 1.7m high. AGM*.

Primula japonica Plant lots of them to bring dashes of colour to the green. 45cm high.

Bog gardens to visit

Barnsdale Gardens was the home of the legendary *Gardeners' World* presenter Geoff Hamilton. He designed and built a bog garden suitable for an average-sized garden. barnsdalegardens.co.uk

Coughton Court in Warwickshire has a bog garden accessed by boardwalks and brimming with dragonflies. coughtoncourt.co.uk

At **Howick Hall Gardens**, Northumberland, there is a bog garden planted from seed gathered in the wild from all over the world to show plants untroubled by hybridisation. howickhallgardens.org

Woburn Abbey in Bedfordshire has a new bog garden (built in 2007), which is planted to represent a dried up stream. woburnabbey.co.uk

*Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.

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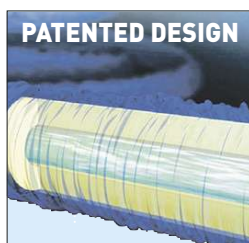
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Vanessa Hoch and Rachel Pocock, graduated from Capel Manor College in 2015 and have established their own garden design business VaRa Garden Design. Their debut RHS Garden was designed as an inspirational space in an education setting, for visitors to learn and reect and discover their potential. "The opportunity to put our first planting design into fruition and to be rewarded with a Silver-Gilt medal at Hampton Court is beyond my wildest dreams," said Vanessa. "Both Rachel and myself are incredibly proud of what we have achieved and are grateful for all the help from our team of planters and hard landscapers."

"Our experience at Capel Manor gave us, and our fellow students of all ages, the opportunity to follow a different path; to utilise and build on our skills and interests. Garden design has enabled me to combine my love of being outside in green spaces with an appreciation of colour and design," Rachel says, "I'm so glad I made the leap."

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Capel Manor College

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Enfield Centre

Bullsmoor Lane, Enfield EN1 4RQ

Crystal Palace Park Centre

The Jubilee Stand, Ledrington Road, London SE19

Gunnersbury Park

Popes Lane, Acton, London W3 8LQ

Regent's Park

The Store Yard, Inner Circle, Regents Park, London NW1 4NR

Tel: 08456 122 122 **Web:** www.capel.ac.uk



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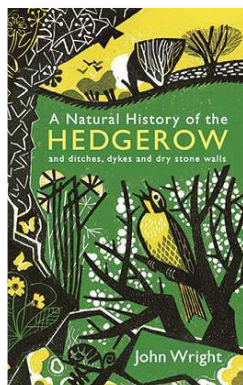
Book reviews, crossword, back issues, competitions, shop



Learn to love some of Britain's most
troublesome plants in *Wonderful Weeds*
by Madeline Harley, reviewed on page 110.

MADLINE HARLEY

Book reviews



A NATURAL HISTORY OF THE HEDGEROW: AND DITCHES, DYKES AND DRY STONE WALLS

by John Wright

Profile Books, £16.99
ISBN 978-1846685521

Caution: the author's charm, knowledge and enthusiasm will make you want to walk very slowly around fields.

Reviewer Andy Hamilton is a forager, writer and brewer.

The author John Wright was once a furniture maker and I bet he could talk about dovetail joints at length, and still make it sound interesting. Now a naturalist, John, has done that here with what could have been a very dry subject.

There is something utterly charming about the man – it's in his turn of phrase. When talking about very early Mesolithic field stone boundaries, for example, he knows he is on thin ice with hedge historians and so, he states that they could, 'with a pronounced raising of an eyebrow, be called a hedge'.

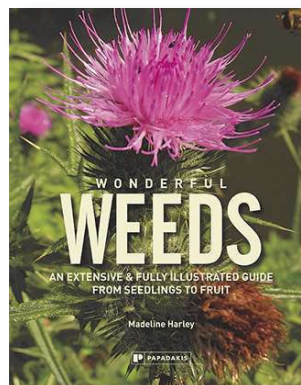
This is not to say that his book isn't meticulously researched. Indeed, this is a man who spends hours looking at field edges on Google Maps, and someone who knows the hedges around his area as if they were family. It is merely to point out that John is a storyteller, and a good one too.

This book is a beautiful and personal account that is as dense

as even the most ancient of hedgerows. Not only does every bush, tree and hedge get a mention, but every moth, wasp and weevil that you might find lurking in one also makes an appearance, along with every dyke and dry stone wall.

Often John gives us insights into the interplay between these species – how willow, for example, 'enjoys the company of several galls' and the names of the moths that feast on the different bedstraws. Some of my favourite facts from this tome include how the Scots have more than a dozen names for dek (or dyke) and that bee-sized openings in dry stone walls are called bee boles, while rabbit openings are called rabbit smoots.

I'm certain that these 300-odd pages, which are richly illustrated, will have you too slowing down to observe one of the most unique and valuable resources our countryside has to offer: our field boundaries.



Wonderful Weeds

by Madeline Harley

Papadakis, £25
ISBN 978-1906506605

The ultimate British weed guide, suitable for all gardeners with 240 pages of botanical and practical information.

Reviewer Tamsin Westhorpe is a writer, lecturer and gardener.

Few of us would choose a book on weeds as bedtime reading, but I guarantee that *Wonderful Weeds* will have you staying up into the night.

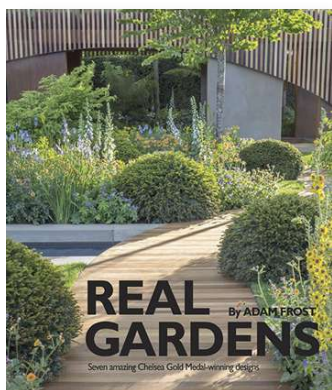
It features 200 weeds and is the most comprehensive record of British weeds to be published in many years. Author Dr Madeline Harley has created a book that will help gardeners understand these plants. This is not a publication about weeding techniques, rather it teaches you how each plant spreads and where they thrive, which inevitably will help with control. The accurate information helps encourage gardeners to look at weeds in a different light and I wouldn't be surprised if it sparks a new love affair with some.

Each weed is clearly illustrated with photography, making identification a breeze. It tempted me out to the border to start my ident and I quickly and easily found in the book the plants that have made a home

in my garden. The introduction is comprehensive and covers weed benefits to insects and birds, troublesome weeds and control without chemicals. Each weed is given its common and Latin name, with its pollination details, regeneration strategies, control, uses and toxicity presented alongside. A page is dedicated to each plant and images show the stages of the plant's life cycle, from seed to flower to foliage and, in some cases, roots and fruits.

It's an inclusive book that offers a clear glossary for novice gardeners and a useful description of each plant family mentioned. This should not put off experienced gardeners, though, as they too will find it hugely informative.

At £25, it's worth every penny as it's a book that will be handed down through the generations and never weeded out of the bookshelf. My only disappointment is that it wasn't published many years ago.



REAL GARDENS

by Adam Frost

Ovolo Books, £16.99
ISBN 978-1905959488

The stories behind Adam Frost's seven gold medal-winning Chelsea show gardens that have all been designed with realism in mind.

Reviewer Stephanie Donaldson is a garden writer.

Garden designer Adam Frost makes his show gardens as close to real British gardens as possible. Not for him the flights of fancy of twirling topiary, a desert habitat or a jungle hideaway. This clear focus has paid off with seven gold medals (so far) for his Chelsea gardens.

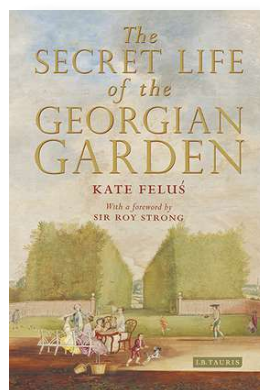
Each of these medal winners is included in this book, which records how he came up with the concept, the design process, and the materials and plants that were used in its construction and completion.

For each of his gardens Adam begins with an imaginary couple as the clients and then designs a garden to meet their needs. The seven gardens include a small urban front garden, an ornamental kitchen garden, combining the edible and the decorative, and a rural retreat inspired by the local landscape of the 19th-century poet John Clare, who also worked as a gardener at Burghley House in Lincolnshire.

The book reveals the depth of thought that goes into the making of each garden and the diverse sources of inspiration, from Frank Lloyd Wright and the Bauhaus movement to Adam's childhood memories.

Crafted detail is an important element of Adam's gardens and there is much to emulate or adapt for anyone looking for good design ideas. For those with practical ability, the detailed plans and drawings may prove useful, especially as scale drawings can be downloaded from the internet.

Some of the photography of the early gardens is a bit weak, but as Adam's reputation has grown, so has the quality of the images. However, sadly, the one real downside of this book is poor editing, especially with inconsistent or incorrect plant names, but if you can overlook that, this is an entertaining and informative read by one of our most popular garden designers.



THE SECRET LIFE OF THE GEORGIAN GARDEN

by Kate Feluś

IB Tauris, £17.99
ISBN 978-1784535728

An animated and beautifully illustrated survey of how comfortable Georgians used their gardens across Britain.

Reviewer Jennifer Potter is a garden historian and garden writer.

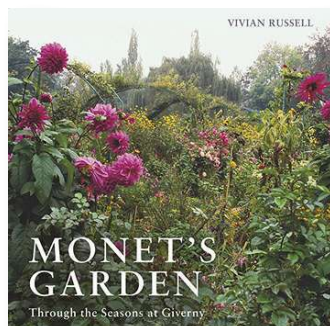
'Views, brews and loos' are what visitors to National Trust landscapes and gardens demand today, and so it was for the Georgians', says garden historian Kate Feluś, who invites us into the 'agreeable retreats' scattered across the landscapes of Britain's upper and middle classes to investigate what people actually did in them.

Dividing her material by time of day, she animates her scene with archival snippets drawn from letters, plans, journals and inventories. She also includes many rarely seen images, in which she skilfully directs your eye to the significant detail: the tiny figures fishing from *inside* an open-fronted garden building in Mrs Delany's charming watercolour of her brother's Staffordshire estate; the single-seat privy camouflaged as a moss house when three-seaters were the norm.

A social historian might have sought to illuminate the

experiences of those whose labours made such Arcadian pleasures possible. Feluś sticks to the practicalities of what was done where and when, rather than probing wider cultural and intellectual forces at work. But there is much to enjoy, not least banker Henry Hoare wallowing in the 'Asiatick luxury' of his cold bath at Stourhead, and a sardonic Horace Walpole complaining of his age and the British weather as he sups with his companions at the grotto in Stowe's Elysian Fields. Georgian gardens were also theatres of scientific enquiry, although the books in the Lord Bishop of Derry's (unheated) clifftop temple mouldered in disorderly piles while upstart John Burdon, whose money came from coal mining, furnished his canalside library with painted fakes. Best of all was the night-time garden, fit for solitary moonlit walks or firework extravaganzas for thousands, when these magical places really came to life.

Book reviews



MONET'S GARDEN: THROUGH THE SEASONS AT GIVERNY

by Vivian Russell

Frances Lincoln, £16.99
ISBN 978-0711238435

This reissue, which paints a picture of Monet as an artist and gardener, reaffirms the importance of his garden at Giverny.

Reviewer John Hoyland is a writer and plantsman.

Monet's Garden is a reissue of a book that first appeared 21 years ago to wide acclaim from art historians as much as from gardeners. It is a reminder that what this revolutionary artist created at Giverny in France is one of the world's most important gardens.

Russell details how Monet observed the natural world, how he saw light and colour and how he translated this into a garden. Her tone is scholarly but not inaccessible and paints a warm and humane portrait of Monet as artist and gardener. She describes how he created an 'orgy of colours and perfumes, of drunkenness of senses' while also relishing simplicity, eloquently summing up the garden: 'Everything hung in a delicate balance. Monet's discriminating judgment in both his garden and his art created a vision of perfect integrity.'

At the heart of the book is Giverny's team of gardeners,

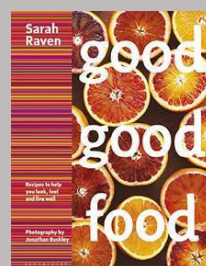
who are followed throughout the year, and the practical horticulture necessary to maintain the garden is explained to us, with detailed planting plans and descriptions of gardening techniques. Threaded through this, a portrait emerges of Monet the gardener: breeding dahlias, bemoaning pests, swapping plants and showing off new acquisitions.

Russell's talent as a writer is equalled by her skill as a photographer, providing us with a feast of beautiful images of gardeners at work, of sumptuous plant portraits, of evocative garden scenes.

Monet 'paints atmosphere', Russell quotes art historian John Rewald as saying, and she reminds us that atmosphere lies at the heart of a great garden. In this book she captures brilliantly and precisely, in images and in words, the atmosphere that makes Monet's garden unique.

Other books

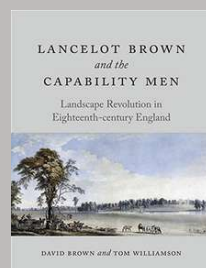
Five titles including Sarah Raven's new cookbook, the history of onions and essays on the discovery of Chinese gardens.



GOOD GOOD FOOD

by Sarah Raven
photography by Jonathan Buckley
Bloomsbury, £25
ISBN 978-1408835555

250 health-boosting, Mediterranean-style recipes that use wholesome ingredients to aid wellbeing.



LANCELOT BROWN AND THE CAPABILITY MEN

by David Brown and Tom Williamson
Reaktion Books, £30
ISBN 978-1780236445

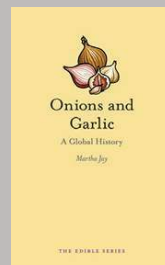
Step into the professional world of Capability Brown and landscape design in Georgian England.



BEAKS, BONES & BIRD SONGS

by Roger J Lederer
Timber Press, £15
ISBN 978-1604696486

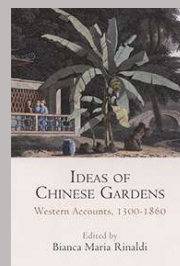
Read all about the intricate and diverse life of birds and how the struggle for survival has shaped their behaviour.



ONIONS AND GARLIC: A GLOBAL HISTORY

by Martha Jay
Reaktion Books, £10.99
ISBN 978-1780235875

Find out how plants belonging to the allium family have made their mark across the world.

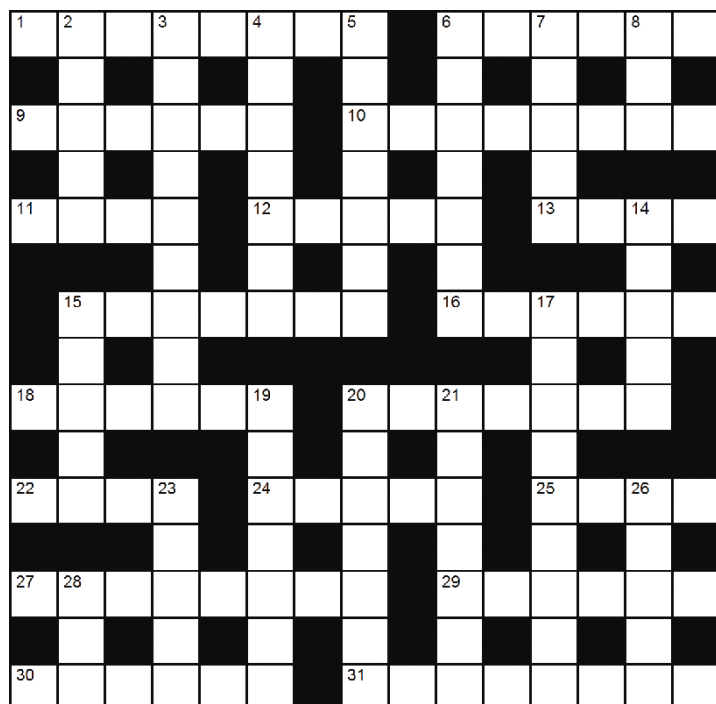


IDEAS OF CHINESE GARDENS: WESTERN ACCOUNTS, 1300-1860

edited by Bianca Maria Rinaldi
University of Pennsylvania
Press, £58.50
ISBN 978-0812247633

A detailed history on the European discovery of Chinese gardens.

Crossword



ACROSS

- 1** Blue, fluffy-flower of aster family – silver, sort of mature (8)
6 Plant crowns from which shoots grow (6)
9 Mustard-flavoured oriental brassica – partly bent at soil (6)
10 Summer-flowering bulb with bell-shaped flowers got liana twisted (8)
11 *Melissa*, for instance, in heather border (4)
12 Awfully nasty composite plant with button-like yellow flowers (5)
13 Soft hairs eg as on *Betula pubescens* leaves (4)
15 Huge-leaved plant aka Indian rhubarb – possibly 'Demerara', but not English (7)
16 It's an underground offshoot, sap! (6)
18 Flat-headed flower cluster – initially, curls over, ruining your mixed border (6)
20 Genus of castor oil plant – 5/7th of which is the toxin it contains (7)
22 Draught? It could be fatally attractive to slugs (4)
24 Another name for okra (wild plumbago, pal removed) (5)
25 Pieces of turf – appeal for help, contains date! (4)
27 Deep pink *Phlox paniculata* – blazing with love? (8)
29 Vegetable right inside watering can's pourer (6)
30 Creamy-white chrysanthemum

- producing a terrible groan (6)
31 As a tree's damaged the wild Michaelmas daisy (3,5)

DOWN

- 2** Clearing in trees – pleased with coppice's end (5)
3 Sound of disapproval for a soft fruit (9)
4 Prickly stemmed plant with (usually) blue flowers (7)
5 Mother embracing rep – is the colour of beetroot! (7)
6 Climbers with blue-bell shaped flowers has Sally so excited (7)
7 Shape of passiflora fruits is nothing on empty space (5)
8 Flower garland from part of mullein (3)
14 Roots out western seed variety (5)
15 Pollinator in *Rhododendron* 'Egret' (5)
17 Genus of dog's-tail grasses gets us corny US variation (9)
19 Profuse-flowering tuberous plant – a big one, anyway (7)
20 Wild garlic – right replacing top of small plums (7)
21 Coyish about a fragrant, white-flowering shrub (7)
23 Ardent chap's name for a *Diascia* series (5)
26 Stone fruit to hang loosely, it's said (5)
28 Vigorous, large-flowered snowdrop – from Polynesia? (3)

SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

JULY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS 1 Candelabra 7 Buds 10 Mugwort 11 Rush 12 Swirl 13/9 Deadnettle 14 Plumbago 18 Agaric 20 Plantain 23 Aroid 25 Mace 26 Desiree 27 Altona 28 Anya 29 Windflower.

DOWN 2 Asexual 3 Dutch 4 Leeks 5 Bambino 6 Angel 7 Broadcast 8 De Thame 15 Mertensia 16 Arc 17/22 Seakale 19 Gladdon 20 Protein 21 Incense 23/17a Arrow-shaped 24 Dwarf 25 Motto.

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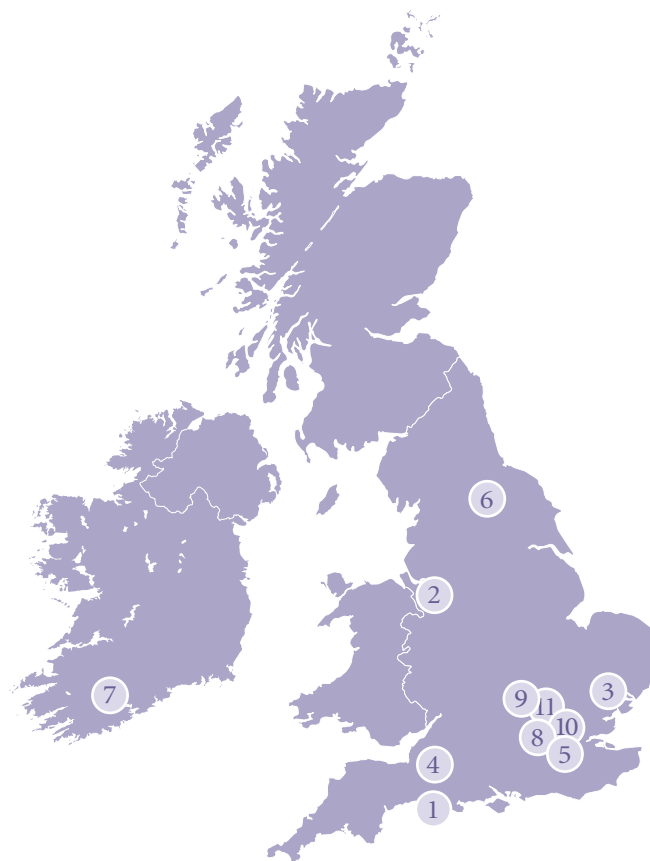
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Reader competitions

WIN: A Southwold shed from The Posh Shed Company, worth £2,350



The Posh Shed Company designs and builds high-quality, wooden sheds that look attractive but, which are first and foremost functional. Built to exacting standards, all the sheds, whichever one you choose, will complement and enhance your home and garden.

New to The Posh Shed Company range is The Southwold, designed in the style of a traditional beach hut, yet fitting into a garden setting and offering the usual benefits of a shed.

The Southwold measures 1.5m x 1.5m and is perfect for anyone with a smaller-sized garden. It features a covered veranda for tools

or potted plants and a diamond-shaped rear window, high up to allow for maximum storage or shelving beneath. It is made using a unique triple wall construction and has fully weather-proof walls, floor and roof, plus it includes a five-lever lock on the door. The shed comes in a range of colours and three different roof options of felt shingle, slate effect and cedar shingle.

The Posh Shed Company and *Gardens Illustrated* are delighted to offer one lucky reader the prize of a Southwold shed (painted in Pearl, pictured far right, with mineral felt roof), worth £2,350.

How to enter

Answer the following question for your chance to win a Southwold shed.

In which county would you find the seaside town of Southwold?

a) Devon b) Kent c) Suffolk

By post

Send a postcard with your answer, along with your name, address, postcode, email and a contact telephone number to *Gardens Illustrated* 237/Posh Shed, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA.

Online at gardensillustrated.com

Closing date 31 August 2016.

For full details of this shed and to see the complete range from The Posh Shed Company visit theposhshedcompany.co.uk

Terms & Conditions

1 The promoter is Immediate Media Company Bristol. 2 Entrants must be UK residents aged 18 years or older, excluding the promoter's employees. 3 The closing date for entries is 11.59pm on 31 August 2016. Entries received after the closing date will not be considered. 4 By entering the promotion, the participants agree to be bound by these terms and conditions; that their surname and county of residence may be released if they win a prize and that should they win the promotion, their name and likeness may be used by the Promoter for prearranged promotional purposes. 5 Entrants must supply to Immediate Media Company Limited their full name, email address and daytime telephone number. The Promoter will use entrants' personal details in accordance with the Immediate Privacy Policy (www.immediatemediacompany.co.uk/privacy-policy). 6 Only one entry will be permitted per person, regardless of method of entry. Bulk entries made by third parties will not be permitted. 7 The winning entrant will be the first correct entry drawn at random from all the correct entries after the closing date. The draw is final and no correspondence will be entered into. The winner will be notified within ten days of the close of the promotion by post/telephone/email. 8 The prize is a Southwold shed from The Posh Shed Company, painted in Pearl (cream) with a mineral felt roof. Delivery will be eight weeks to mainland UK only. 9 There is no cash alternative and the prize will not be transferable. The prize must be taken as stated and cannot be deferred. The Promoter reserves the right to substitute the prize with one of the same or greater value. 10 For details of the winner send an SAE to Immediate Media Company Bristol within two months of the closing date. 11 The Promoter does not accept any responsibility for lost, delayed or fraudulent entries. 12 If the winner is unable to be contacted within 20 days of the promotion's closing date, the Promoter reserves the right to offer the prize to a runner up, or to re-offer the prize in any future promotion. 13 The Promoter excludes liability to the full extent permitted by law for any loss, damage or injury occurring to the participant arising from his or her entry into the promotion or occurring to the winner arising from his or her acceptance of a prize. 14 The promotion is subject to the laws of England. 15 Immediate Media Company Limited (publishers of *Gardens Illustrated*) would love to keep you informed by post or telephone of special offers and promotions from the Immediate Media Company Group. Please write 'Do not contact: Immediate Media Co Ltd' if you would prefer not to receive these. *Gardens Illustrated* would like to keep you informed of newsletters, special offers and other promotions by email or text message. Please write your email address and mobile number on your postcard if you would like to receive these. You may unsubscribe from these at any time. The Posh Shed Company would like to keep you informed by email, post or phone of their special offers and promotions. Please write 'Do not contact: The Posh Shed Company' on your entry if you would prefer not to receive these.

WIN: A trip to Italy's stylish garden show Orticolario, 30 September – 2 October 2016



We are delighted to once again offer readers the opportunity to visit Orticolario, one of Italy's premier gardening events, by entering our competition. Held in the grounds of Villa Erba on the shores of Lake Como, the show gathers together top nurseries, companies selling garden-related products and food specialists, all with an eye to fashion, taste, art, design and, of course, the very best in horticulture.

The theme for Orticolario 2016 considers the impact of the sixth

sense – going beyond the five physical sensations and taking into account our perception of ideas, beauty and emotions.

Held in early autumn, visitors can admire show garden displays drawn from an international selection, chat to nurserymen to get advice about the best plants for late-season interest, choose from artisan accessories and garden furniture, plus take part in workshops and expert talks. orticolario.it

Our competition

Enter our competition for the chance to visit Orticolario as a VIP guest.

The prize (for two people)

- Flights out: London to Milan on 30 September 2016; return Milan to London on 2 October 2016.
- Transfers from and to Milan airport.
- Overnight stay in Cernobbio, in a double room for two nights, with breakfast and dinners included.

- Tickets to Orticolario garden show on Saturday 1 October with lunch in VIP area within Villa Erba.
- Choice of Como city tour, or boat trip, or tour of Lake Como's villas with lunch on Sunday 2 October.

How to enter

Answer the following question

Who set up Orticolario?

- a) Moritz Mantero, b) Boris Manteris, c) Monty Banderos

By post Send your answer on a postcard along with your name, address and contact details to *Gardens Illustrated* 237/ Orticolario, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA.
Online at gardensillustrated.com

Closing date 19 August 2016.

Terms and conditions apply (see below).

Please note: prize does not include transport to and from airport in the UK.

Dates are not transferable. Times of flights subject to availability.

Terms & Conditions

Promoter: Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited. Promotion excludes promoter employees, contractors and anyone connected with the promotion or their direct family members. By entering, you agree to be bound by all the rules of the promotion. Only one entry per person. Entrants must be UK residents aged 18 years or older. No responsibility accepted for lost, delayed, ineligible or fraudulent entries. This promotion is subject to the laws of England. Winning entries will be chosen at random from all eligible entries. The closing date for entries is 11.59pm, 19 August 2016. The winners will be notified by email or post within 7 days of the closing date. The draw is final and no correspondence will be entered into. For winners' details send an SAE within two months of closing date to GI Competitions, Immediate Media, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN. If a winner is unable to be contacted within ten days of the closing date, the Promoter will offer the prize to a runner up. Promoter reserves the right to substitute the prize with one of the same or greater value but there is no cash alternative. Dates are not transferable. The prize does not include travel to/from UK airport. Personal expenses and other travel arrangements not already mentioned will not be included. The winner plus their guest is responsible for arranging their own travel insurance (and visa if applicable). Entrants' details will be used in accordance with Immediate's Privacy Policy (immediate.co.uk/privacy-policy).

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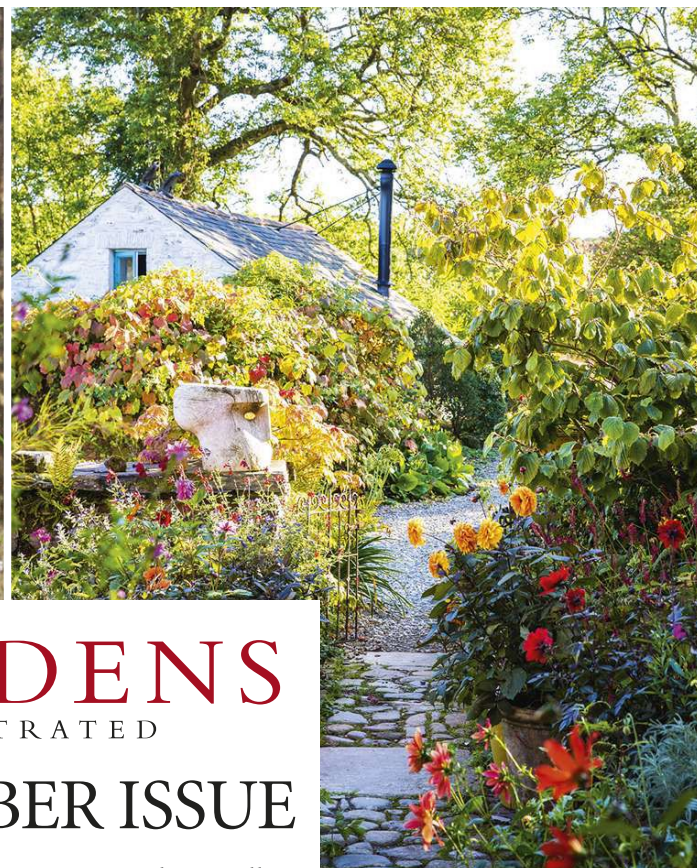
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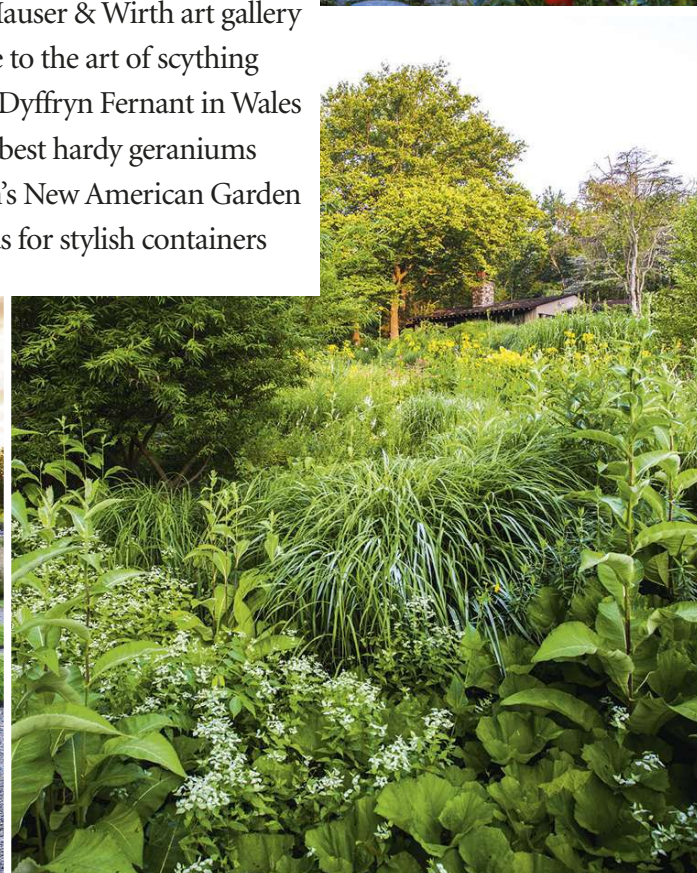


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Mixed blessings

As weeds claim a border in his UK garden, Frank grabs the chance to start again

WORDS FRANK RONAN ILLUSTRATION CELIA HART

Absentee gardening is not the ideal, but it can sometimes force your hand. When in Worcestershire I can only concentrate on the smaller beds which are home to the precious things. Besides those, once I've squeezed in the necessary minimums of mowing, strimming and pruning, there isn't time to attack the big borders in any meaningful way. The most that is possible is to check that the odd thing is still alive behind a curtain of weed and free it from immediate stranglehold.

Not that I am fooling myself that those beds weren't already getting more and more out of hand before the abandonment. That was due, in the worst place, to a fundamental design flaw that I had begun to despair of seeing a way out of. The nearest half of the long border is downhill from the meadow and, every year, everything that is in the meadow sends seed bouncing and cavorting down into it, and most things that are wanted in a meadow are distinctly unwanted in a border.

Like the monkey who cannot bear to open his fist and lose the nut to get his hand out of the gourd, I was trapped. The meadow I would defend with my life against anyone who threatened to demote it back to lawn. Once or twice I considered giving up on that end of the border and letting the meadow have its way and run down to the hedge. But, apart from clinging to a design that linked the whole garden together, that would never work for the reason that the soil in the border is now so rich it could never be meadowed satisfactorily. I began a policy of planting more shrubs and small trees into it, under the delusion that if it became a shady border that might help. It didn't.

Now, after several seasons of total neglect, the situation is not so much changed as more evidently what it really is. The trouble, I now realise, was that I



The most that is possible is to check that the odd thing is alive behind a curtain of weed

had the fixed idea that it should be a mixed border, all the length of it. I was hung up on the ideals of successional planting where all possible categories are in harmony. Now that the perennial bulbs and herbaceous elements have been obliterated the way forward is much clearer.

In the beginning, before I had much herbaceous stuff to put in there, and had to fill the gap with cannas and dahlias, that part of the border was quite successful. It only started to go downhill once the bedding spaces became smaller and it wasn't being dug over in its entirety

several times a year. The weeding became cautious because I'd be loathe to disturb some ridiculously rare and expensive gladiolus that should never have been consigned there in the first place.

Odd how easily fun becomes neurosis and stops being fun, and dreadful how difficult it is to stop doing something once it has become a neurosis. But now the slate has been cleaned and I watch the invasion of the weeds with grim satisfaction. Let them do their worst. The rare and expensive are already long forgotten (and I have learned my lesson about putting them straight into a big border at the bottom of a meadow), and the common and relatively robust are soon to follow.

Then will come the reckoning and, once the exile is at an end, the whole border can be dug over as it was when it was new, not so long ago. The difference this time is that there is already a framework of trees and shrubs. More importantly I know now what to plant where; which bits are drier and wetter. And essentially, at the bottom of the meadow, between the woody stuff, it will be entirely temporary. I used to do a lot of that and be excited by it, but as the garden developed and settled there was less room for it. It is nice to be able to see the way forward. □



Frank Ronan is a novelist who gardens in both the UK and USA.

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